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THE SNOWY OWL.*

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

Stranger-Bird, from Baffin's Bay,
  Where the white bear roams in state;
Where the icebergs plunge and play,
Knocking in their ruffian way,
  At the close-barr'd Arctic gate.

Mighty Bird, from Baffin's Bay,
  With thy wide-spread wings in motion,
Five feet o'er from tip to tip,
Sailing like a snowy ship
  Through blue ether's waveless ocean;

How thy large, round, golden eyes,
  With black pupils so surprising,
And thy fearful beak could make
Rabbitdom and Ratdom quake
  In thy fits of gormandizing.

Wo to the devoted nest,
  Where the fledgelings upward gazing
For their parents from the sky,
Should those great, fix'd orbs espy,
  So portentous, so amazing.

Thou wouldst be a traveller, sure,
  Emulous of future glory—
Spend a winter to explore
Far New England's rock-bound shore,
  Somewhat famed in pilgrim story.

Thou, perchance, hadst never heard
  Yankee shots were sharp and thrilling;
And the people shrewd to guess
In whatever queer recess
  Lurk'd a dollar, or a shilling.

Great Minerva's solemn bird!
  Mournfully I sing thy fate;
Slain and stuff'd, a trophy made
'Neath a throng'd Museum's shade,
Ends thy last marauding raid,
  Ends thy tour unfortunate.

Often have I wonder'd why
  Pallas in her wisdom made
Owls, the exponents of her lore:
A grave face, and nothing more,
Seems the highest claim they bore
  To a title thus convey'd.

Hartford, April 30th, 1863.

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* An immense snowy or Arctic Owl was recently shot on the western heights in Hartford, measuring five feet across the wings, and with thick, downy feathers beneath them, enabling him to swoop on his prey in perfect silence.

THE FORTUNES OF CONRAD.

A ROMANCE OF ANCIENT BRITTANY.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

CHAPTER XXII.

OLD FRIENDS.

Almost as soon as the day had dawned prince Bertrand presented himself at the office of the royal guard, with the order for the immediate and private execution of Conrad du Nord. He was to see the deed done. A lieutenant took the keys, and went with him down into the dungeon; but the place was empty.

"This is not the cell," said the prince.

"This is certainly the cell, my lord."

"Then where is the prisoner?"

The guardsman was bewildered. He could tell nothing about it.

"How long have you been on guard?" asked Bertrand.

"Since four o'clock."

"How long were those on whom you relieved?"

"Four hours, from midnight."

"By the gods!" cried Bertrand, stamping his foot, and gnashing his teeth, "if the prisoner has been led away, it must have been done during that time. But let us look."

All the cells in that depth were examined, but no prisoner was found. Then the prince hastened back to the office with the lieutenant, and called for the captain. But the captain was not at hand.

"How many sentinels were there in and about the prison?" demanded the prince.

The lieutenant said there were ten.

"Let those ten who were on from midnight until four o'clock this morning be instantly summoned."

The summons was sent; but the men were not found.

"They should be in their beds at this hour," said the lieutenant; "but they are not there; and their beds have not been touched during the night."

"Then, by heaven! they have deserted!" exclaimed Bertrand, gasping as he spoke.

"It looks like it, my lord."

The prince rushed out, and in the court he met one of his father's ushers, the sight of whom caused him, for a moment, to forget the errand he had started upon.

"Ah—fellow—here! Have you seen the king this morning?"

"No, my lord," replied the usher, bowing respectfully.

"I fear my father is not well. He looked sick and faint when I left him last night."

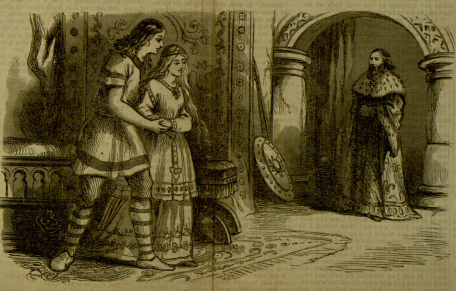
The usher passed on, and Bertrand hurried away to the office of the palace guard, where he assured himself that all the sentinels who had held watch in the prison during the last half of the night had run away. He flew from place to place, like one possessed, and in less than half an hour he had gained considerable information. Three things he knew well enough. First: Conrad du Nord had escaped. Second: The Duke of Rennes had assisted him. Third: He had gone with horses and friends.

"I do much suspect," muttered the prince to himself, "that Sir Philip de Savenay has lent his aid to this; but I will not accuse him yet, I will find the fugitive first; and I will deal with him afterwards."

As he thus muttered Poins came in with a report. He had met some fishermen just beyond the wall, who had declared that they saw, about an hour past midnight, a party of horsemen dashing off over the sand towards the Villaine road.

A few more reports were brought in; and then the prince sent for Thamar, who quickly answered his call.

[ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1863, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.]



CONRAD AND ROSALINE.

"Thamar, how many of the royal guard can you count upon as true to me?"

"All whom you have helped to the position, my lord; certainly a score of them."

"You have your commission as lieutenant?"

"Yes.'

"Suppose I should show you an order from the king commanding the arrest of Conrad du Nord, and that I should bid you to apprehend him?"

"I should obey you, my lord."

"Then look ye: The case is ten times more emphatic than that. A prisoner, whom the king had condemned to death for high treason, has escaped. Can you call twenty of the royal guard, and give pursuit?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Then away, at once. You know the man. It is Conrad du Nord; and I think that some of the duke's guard are with him. If Casimir has directed him to a place of safety, I think I risk nothing in deciding that that place is Anjou. With this clue let your wits serve you. Spare not your horses. Change them as often as you can. Ride for your lives. Aye—my good Thamar, ride for the place of power which Sir Philip de Savenay now occupies! Do you understand me?"

"My lord, if Conrad du Nord lives, look to see him back in Vannes when I return; and I will return as quickly as possible. I will eat and sleep in the saddle until I find him."

"Good! Away now; and if you bring the prisoner back as you promise, the reward I have spoken of may be nearer than you imagine."

Within half an hour from that time Thamar had placed himself at the head of five-and-twenty stout guardsmen, and was galloping out from the city.

* * * * * * *

Conrad du Nord found good horses in his train, and before daylight he had crossed the Villaine; and, just as the sun was rising, he reached the hamlet of Chenay, where he concluded to stop and get breakfast.

"We will eat, and change horses here," said Nicolas; "and then be on our way again. We shall not be long detained."

A small inn was found, where the seal of the duke brought forth promise of the horses, and where a good meal could be readily prepared. While the host was making ready in the kitchen, Conrad threw himself into an easy-chair, and closed his eyes. He had fallen away into a dreamy slumber, when he was aroused by feeling a hand upon his shoulder, and hearing his name pronounced. He started up, and beheld Francesco standing by his side.

"My father!" he cried, springing to his feet, and rubbing his eyes.

"Conrad, my boy!" echoed the old tutor.

"Is it really Francesco?"

"Certainly it is. By my life, this is a strange meeting. I was just waking from a curious dream when the horses came rattling into the court; and upon going to the window I saw your very self getting down from the saddle; and can you wonder, my boy, that I made all haste to meet you?"

"It was natural that you should. But tell me, Francesco,—why are you here?"

"I have started for Vannes, my boy. Your kind old mother, Marguerite, has been stolen away from us; and I think she has been carried thither. Ah,—I see by your face, that this is no news to you. What have you to tell? I am very anxious, Conrad."

"I have much to tell," replied our hero, motioning his old tutor to a seat. They were alone, Nicholas having gone to look after the horses, while the rest of the party were in the kitchen.

"I have much to tell," repeated Conrad, resuming his seat. "Listen to me, for I am going to startle you."

And thereupon the youth went on to tell of all that had befallen him since he left the castle of Rennes. He told of the coming of Sir Philip; of the arrival at Vannes; of the first interview of Casimer with the king; of the complaint which the prince entered; of the attack of Pluton; of the coming of the last summons; of the startling disclosures made by Father Jerome; of the introduction of Marguerite, and of her story; of his condemnation and imprisonment; and of the coming of the duke to set him free. At first the old man had been deeply affected; but he managed to control himself until the narrative reached the disclosures of the monk, and the corroborating testimony of Marguerite. At this point he shook convulsively, and seemed almost inclined to doubt the truth of the story.

"Did Marguerite tell that?" he asked, when he could control his speech.

"Yes. But, Francesco, I am sure that she had been promised that it should do me no harm. She fainted before the king, and was racked with mortal agony. I cannot blame her."

The hermit asked many questions touching the doings of the prince, the speech of the king, the appearance of Father Jerome, and the movements of the duke; and when he had made himself familiar with all the details, he arose and commenced to pace the room.

Conrad was upon the point of speaking further, when the host looked into the room, and announced that breakfast was ready.

"Let us move quickly," said Nicolas, appearing upon the threshold as the host turned away. "The horses will be ready for us.——Ah—whom have we here?"

"This is Francesco,—my tutor and guardian," replied our hero. And then turning the other way, he added,—"And this is Nicolas, the captain of the duke's guard."

"Let there be no haste," said Francesco, after he had embraced the captain. "Conrad must not leave this place until he sees another friend."

"But, my good sir," interposed Nicolas, "you know not what you say. We are——"

"I know all," said the old man, interrupting him. "Conrad has told me the whole story; and I must bid him wait. There is one coming who may help him."

"Ah," uttered the captain, shaking his head, "a stop here may ruin all his hopes of escape."

"And yet," pursued Francesco, resolutely, "he must wait. The Abbott of Saint Aubin will be here in a very short time. He must see the abbott."

At the mention of that name the captain's resolution was shaken.

"Is good old Dagobert coming?" asked Conrad.

"Yes. He stopped at Saint Eustace last night, and will join me here this morning.—But your breakfast is waiting. Eat, and we will converse afterwards."

Conrad followed the captain to the kitchen, and after the meal was eaten he rejoined his tutor, whom he found pacing up and down the court in front of the inn.

"I wish much to see old Dagobert; and yet to tarry here is dangerous," said the youth, after Francesco had once more bidden him to wait.

"Conrad," spoke the hermit, stopping, and resting his hand upon the boy's arm, "I would not willingly lead you into danger. Do as I bid you."

"But, father, we shall be pursued. Even now the royal guardsmen may be upon my track; and if they overtake us, they will come in a force which may not be resisted. Remember—it is not now the prince who strikes; it is the king!"

"You can tell me nothing which I do not already understand," returned Francesco. "Heaven sent this meeting."

Conrad started at these words, and a wild hope flashed up in his bosom.

"Answer me one question," he cried, grasping the old man by the arm. "Did the monk tell the truth?"

"In what?"

"In saying that I was the child of those traitorous parents."

"Dagobert can tell you of that better than I can."

"Beware, Francesco! O, if you give me reason to hope thus, and the spark should die out——"

"*Wait and see the abbott!*" spoke the old man, slowly and meaningly. "You must not leave this place until he comes."

"I shall obey you."

At that moment Nicolas came up and announced that the horses would be ready in a very few minutes.

"Let them wait," said Conrad. "I must remain here and see the Abbott of Saint Aubin."

"But, good Conrad, have you counted the cost?"

"I have counted everything, Nicolas—and I will wait."

The captain turned an inquiring glance upon Francesco, who quickly added:

"The boy is right. He must see Dagobert."

"Then I hold myself above all blame," said Nicolas, not at all reconciled to the arrangement.

"I am responsible," answered Conrad. He spoke promptly; and yet there was a strange flutter of uncertainty and anxiety in his bosom. When the captain had gone he turned to his old tutor, and asked him if he would answer one more question.

"Ask what you please," replied Francesco.

"If the monk spoke falsely, then Marguerite spoke falsely, also."

"And yet they may both have been mistaken. Wait until you see the abbott."

They waited two hours. Nicolas was in torture, for he knew that the king's guard could readily trace them. He had approached our hero, to remonstrate against tarrying longer, when Francesco came with the announcement that the abbott had arrived.

The venerable prelate entered the room with a firm step, and as Conrad hastened to meet him he smiled benignantly, and invoked a blessing upon his youthful head. The presence of the white-haired old abbott gave great relief to the captain, who pressed forward to greet him with reverence and love; for the good man upon whose sympathetic heart rested the experience of almost a century, was well known at the castle.

"Now," said Dagobert, when he had taken a seat, "what is this I hear. Francesco has just been telling me something which deeply interests me. Conrad, what have they been doing to you? Let me have the story."

Our hero related to the abbott the circumstances of his adventures as he had related them to his tutor; and he had just concluded when one of the men-at-arms came rushing into the apartment with the intelligence that a large body of mounted men were approaching the hamlet from the direction of Vannes.

Nicolas started up and hastened out; and very soon came back again.

"It is a detachment of the royal guard!" he said; "and Thamar leads them."

"Hold!" spoke Dagobert, as Conrad started to his feet. "Who is this Thamar?"

"He is a lieutenant of the king's guard," replied Nicolas; "but a tool of prince Bertrand's."

"How many are there?" asked Conrad.

"More than a score of them."

"I must not be taken. I will die here——"

"My son," said the abbott, taking the youth by the hand, "you have nothing to fear. If this Thamar has come to take you back to Vannes, go with him quietly. I will accompany you."

"One word," cried Conrad, turning and seizing the old man's hand. "Francesco said you would tell. Did Father Jerome speak truly?"

"HE DID NOT!" replied Dagobert, calmly.

Conrad du Nord staggered as though beneath a stunning blow.

"O, can you prove it?" he gasped.

"I can prove that, and much more," said the abbott. And then, taking both the youth's hands in his own, and speaking in a gentle, persuasive tone, he added,—"I love you as I would love my own child; and yet I say unto thee, Go back with me to Vannes!"

The youth was completely overcome by conflicting emotions; but he had confidence in the abbot, and he consented to obey him.

"But how is it with us?" asked Nicolas.

"I answer for all," replied Dagobert.

In a few moments more a loud tramp was heard in the court, and very soon Thamar, followed closely by a dozen of his men, entered the apartment.

"Conrad du Nord," he said, drawing his sword, "I arrest you in the king's name!"

"You may put up your sword, sir lieutenant," returned our hero; "for I shall go with you quietly and unconditionally." The presence of the armed men called him back to conscious pride, and he spoke calmly and bravely.

Thamar was evidently surprised at the coolness of the prisoner, who, he supposed, must know that he was going back to certain death; but he received the token of surrender with a bow, and then turned to Nicolas, remarking:

"And you, too, captain, with your followers, I arrest."

Nicolas bowed, and signified that he should offer no resistance to the king's officers; simply adding:

"Since we surrender unconditionally, I presume that we are to be respectfully treated."

Thamar was a soldier; and he had a respect for brave men; so he had no disposition to be unnecessarily severe. His only orders had been to take the prisoner; and this he would do; and he was glad, too, that he could do it so easily, for he had expected much trouble.

"Sir lieutenant," said the abbot, pointing to Francesco, "this good brother and myself are going to Vannes; and we would ride in your company. I trust that you will have no objections."

Thamar recognized the cross of St. Aubin, and he bowed respectfully.

"You are welcome, holy father."

"Thank you, my son. I will go out and see that my horse is in readiness."

In the court Dagobert met a yeoman who had accompanied him from Saint Aubin.

"Pierre," he said, speaking lowly and quickly, "you have a fleet horse, and a stout heart. Haste thee to Vannes with all speed, so as to get there well in advance of this troop. Seek Sir Philip de Savenay, and bid him come forth and meet us on the road. Do you understand?"

"Yes, father."

"Then away with you."

Ere long the yeoman was mounted, and the rate of speed at which he dashed over the road gave token that he duly appreciated the importance of his mission.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONCLUSION.

The day was drawing to its close as Thamar approached Vannes with his prisoners. He turned to one of his men, as he beheld the spires of the city, and remarked that he had not calculated upon so speedy a return.

"The prince will not look for us to-night," he added.

"No," responded the other. "His highness probably thinks we are still on the pursuit."

"Very likely," returned Thamar; "for I told him we should not probably reach the fugitives until this day had gone. Ha!—who comes there? It is our captain, as I live; and he has a squadron of the guard with him. What means this?"

"Look!" cried the other speaker. "The old abbot is going to meet him."

It was as had been said. As soon as Sir Philip appeared in the distance, Dagobert, who had been riding well in advance of the cavalcade, put spurs to his horse, and soon joined the knight, with whom he entered into an earnest conversation.

Sir Philip had stopped when the abbot reached him, and he waited there until the lieutenant came up.

"How now, Thamar," he said, riding in front of his subaltern, "you have prisoners?"

The officer could not bring himself to offer slight to his captain, however much he may have wished to pass him with his prize.

"I have prisoners, Sir Philip; and I am conducting them to the city."

"Do you conduct them to the king?"

"The order for their arrest was from the king; but I do not report to him."

"Ah,—to whom do you report?"

"To him through whom the order came."

"You mean the prince?"

"Yes," answered Thamar, reluctantly.

"Then," said Sir Philip, with an authoritative nod of the head, "I will relieve you of your charge."

"How! Relieve me?" gasped the lieutenant, blankly.

"Yes," replied the captain, with another nod. "I will take the prisoners directly to the king."

"But, Captain, I have my orders."

"From whom?" demanded Sir Philip, sternly.

"From the prince."

"Does the prince command the royal guard?"

"But the order was issued by the king."

"And to the king these prisoners shall straightway be carried; so rest you easy on that score." And then Sir Philip added, in a lower tone, and with a look of deep meaning:

"Thamar, *follow not the whelp until the lion is dead!*"

The lieutenant trembled from head to foot; and without further remonstrance he resigned his command to his superior, and fell back with his troop.

Sir Philip, as soon as Thamar had retired, turned to the old abbot, and asked him several questions, which were answered in detail and to the point.

"I understand it now," the gallant knight said, smiting his fist upon the pommel of his saddle, while a bright glow irradiated his features. "By Saint Michael! it is wonderful! You were thoughtful, father, to send for me."

"I had wit enough to see the necessity of that, Sir Philip. Have you seen the duke?"

"Not to speak with him. But he is at his house."

"He must be at the palace."

"So he shall be." And thus speaking, Sir Philip turned to his attendants and beckoned one of them forward.

"Go to the Duke of Rennes, and bid him to repair at once to the royal palace, and there await my coming. Also bid him, if he can, to take Marguerite with him. Hurry away, and let your spurs drip if need be."

It was well into the evening when the King of Brittany was informed by his page that he was wanted in the audience chamber. He sat by his table, with his brow resting upon his hands; and one would have said, upon first beholding him, that he was dying. All he had eaten for four-and-twenty hours had been a few crusts which had been drying and mouldering in his cupboard for weeks; and his only beverage had been of the water that had been brought to him for washing.

"Who wants me?" he asked.

"The Duke of Rennes sent me for you, sire."

"Is he alone?"

"No. There are several with him. Your captain is there, with the young man called Conrad du Nord——"

"Ha!"

"And a white-haired old man, whom I judge to be the Abbott of Saint Aubin."

"What!" cried Theobald, starting to his feet; "is it Dagobert?"

"That is his name, sire."

"I will go at once. O, good Dagobert, I have need of thee!"

Without further delay the king repaired to his chamber of private audience, which he found well lighted, and where he saw the duke and Sir Philip, and the young prisoner, and the woman, Marguerite, and several others; but the one towards whom he moved with quick impulse was the Abbott of Saint Aubin.

"Dagobert! Dagobert!" he cried, "I am glad you have come!" And as he spoke he fairly sank upon the aged prelate's bosom, as though he expected to find a protector there.

"Sire," spoke the abbott, after he had blessed the king, "if I can be of service to you, you may command me; but first I have a matter of most pressing moment to present to your majesty. Can you listen to me?"

"Yes, Dagobert. You may command me, if you please."

"First, sire,—do you recognize these people who are with me?"

Theobald ran his eye over those present, and hesitated not until he came to Francesco.

"Him I know not; and yet I think I have seen him."

"He was for many years in the service of your brother Charles. His name is Francesco."

"Ah—I know him now. And where has he been during this long time?"

"You shall know that anon, sire."

Dagobert led the king to his chair of state, and then continued:

"This youth, whom men call Conrad du Nord, has been once ere this before your majesty; and I am able to inform you that, in the examination which then took place, a most fatal error was committed; and I have now come to reveal the truth. Would you know it, sire?"

"Yes."

"But suppose it should cast a mortal stain upon one near and dear to you?"

"I would not trouble the sleeping dead, holy father."

"I speak of the living, sire."

"Then you mistake," said Theobald, with a sad shake of the head. "I have no near and dear one living!"

A look of relief rested upon Dagobert's face.

"Will you send for the prince, and also for Father Jerome?"

A messenger was dispatched, and ere long Bertrand entered the chamber. He stopped when he saw those who were there assembled; *and when his eye rested upon Conrad du Nord, he stamped his foot with rage.*

"How now!" he cried. "What mockery is this?" Why is the condemned traitor here, with his limbs free, and a sword upon his hip?"

"Hold, my son," interposed the abbott, raising his hand in a persuasive manner. "You shall be entirely satisfied that all is right.——Ah,—here comes our brother Jerome."

At that moment the Benedictine entered the chamber; and when he saw into what company he had come, he was struck with blank astonishment. But he quickly recognized his venerable superior, and reverently saluted him.

"Jerome," said the abbot, seeming determined to come at the business as speedily as possible, "you have been summoned hither to witness the correcting of a sad mistake which you have made. Upon your testimony this young man was pronounced the offspring of base conspirators."

"Not upon mine alone, father."

"Your word condemned him, nevertheless."

"The testimony of Marguerite went with mine."

"Jerome," said the abbott, with some severity, "you must not trifle with truth. How came Marguerite to give her testimony?"

The monk was silent.

"Did you not," continued Dagobert, "solemnly promise her that no harm should come to the youth?"

"Can that alter the weight of her confession?" asked Jerome, as though he would defend himself.

"We shall see.—Marguerite, come hither."

The woman approached, trembling at every joint.

"My daughter," pursued the abbott, answer me truly what I shall ask. Circumstances have arisen which render a longer concealment impossible, and I release you from your vows. Why did you tell the king that Conrad du Nord was the child of Marceau and Marcelline?"

"I did not tell him so."

"How?" demanded Theobald, with a start of surprise.

"When I was alone with Father Jerome and the prince," continued Marguerite, quickly and eagerly, "I may have spoken thus falsely; for I then hardly knew what I said. They swore to me that no harm should come to my boy if he proved to be the child of Marcelline. They said he should be sent out of the country. So, to save him, I spoke as I did. I was keeping the oath which I gave to his mother. But when I came before the king I was more careful of my words. I said that I bore away the infant child of Marcelline, thus saving it from the hands of the executioner, which was true. And then, sire," added the woman, bowing before the king, "you asked me where that child was. I did not answer you—I could not. Directly you asked me if Conrad du Nord was the child which I saved, and I answered you, yes. I spoke truly, for I saved both the children."

"Both!"

"Hold, sire," interposed Dagobert, "I must speak now. Listen to me, all of you, and I will clear away this mystery.—Will your majesty send for your secretary, with instructions that he bring with him the records of the realm as far back as five-and-twenty years."

A messenger was despatched, and while he was gone all was silent in the audience chamber. The prince chafed and fretted, and tore his fingers into the folds of his doublet; but he did not speak. Conrad du Nord stood by the side of Francesco, his heart throbbing till its pulsations were distinctly audible; for the moment was one of terrible interest to him.

By and by the secretary came, bearing under his arm two large books; and when he had saluted the king, he was directed to attend to the abbott.

"Lepidus," said the prelate, calling the secretary by name, "I wish you to refer to your records, and inform us when Marceau and Marcelline were executed."

The scribe opened one of his books, and when he had found the record, and calculated a while, he answered:

"The event occurred four-and-twenty years and one month ago."

"Four-and twenty years and one month, you say?"

"Yes, holy father."

"Now look, and inform us when Mary of Anjou, the wife of Duke Charles, died."

The secretary again referred to the record, and answered:

"Mary of Anjou died three-and-twenty years ago lacking two months."

"So that," said Dagobert, "between the execution of the conspirators and the death of Mary of Anjou, there elapsed one year and three months?"

"Yes, father."

"Sire—Sir Philip de Savenay—my lord of Rennes," pursued the abbott, "you were all acquainted with the household of the duchess. Now tell me—when did Marguerite leave her employ?"

"Marguerite was with the duchess to the last," said Sir Philip.

"Aye," added the king, "I remember that I found her kneeling by the dead body of the duchess, in the chamber of mourning."

"And thus," pursued the abbott, "we have it clearly proved that for over a year, at least, after the disappearance of the child of Marcelline, Marguerite was with Mary of Anjou."

"Good father," cried the king, with intense eagerness, "what do you aim at? Keep me not in the dark."

"Sire," replied Dagobert, while a strange shadow passed over his aged features, "prepare yourself for a wonderful revelation."

"You cannot startle me, Dagobert."

"Be not too sure of that, sire. It is thus that I have to speak:"

The abbott moved a step forward, and then continued:

"Four-and-twenty years ago, and two months over, your wife, the Queen Theresa, gave birth to a son. You were filled with joy, and all your people gave thanks unto God. You had waited long years for an heir, and you had even thought of putting away your queen, when this happy event reconciled you to her. But, while all was joy in your heart, a cloud came over the gladness of Theresa. The infant fell sick, and she knew that it must die. She sent for me to come to her. I was her confessor, and I had acted as her physician. The child was dying when I reached her; and so I told her. Then she asked me to promise her that I would keep the sickness of her infant a secret. Why should I do that? But she would not explain; only she begged me to promise. I did so. I assured her that I would not speak of it without her consent. On the following day I went again, and found Mary of Anjou, and her serving-woman Marguerite, with the queen. The infant was dead. It had just breathed its last; and even then lay cold and still upon its mother's bosom. Theresa sank upon her knees before me, and prayed that I would keep her secret. I asked her what secret she meant. She answered me, that the king must not know that his son was dead. At least, she would have me speak no word until she gave me permission. I consented to this, and went away.

"At this same time, sire, the Count Marceau, and his wife Marcelline, *had been convicted and sentenced, and all their family proscribed.* Marcelline had been in the service of the queen, and the queen loved her as a sister. Even as the infant prince was dying the queen received a note from Marcelline, containing these words: '*For the love of Heaven, save my infant child!*' Can you wonder, sire, that a strange thought presented itself to the queen's mind? She feared to let you know that you had no son. She did not stop to reflect; she did not seek my advice; she only trusted the duchess and Marguerite. Her own dead infant was taken away, and Marguerite brought the child of Marcelline to take its place! A few short weeks after that the queen was taken sick, and upon her death bed she confessed to me what she had done. As the matter then stood I concluded to keep the secret. The king knew not that the child he fondled was of another blood; and I would not break the spell.

"Hold!" commanded Dagobert, as Bertrand rushed forward. "Let me finish the story. Listen a few moments longer, sire. I will soon conclude.

"A little more than a year subsequent to the events I have related, your brother Charles, Duke of Nantes, was slain in the battle of Quimper. His wife, the fair Mary of Anjou, was then residing in Vannes, and had just given birth to a son. The news of her husband's death, coming at a time when she was already weak and prostrate, gave her a mortal blow; and when she knew that she was dying, she became possessed with the idea that her child—her infant boy—would be in constant danger if she left him with those who had the legal right to the guardianship. She had seen so much of the strife and turmoil of the court, that she dreaded to leave the little one to grow up under its influence. And another thing influenced her much. She knew that the growing child at the royal palace, whom people called Prince, was not of the royal blood; and she knew that her own child, as the heir of Duke Charles, stood next in line to the throne, if Theobald died childless. All this frightened her, and she wished that her child might grow up in some quiet, safe retreat, and be educated for the church. She sent for me, and confided to me her plans. I reflected upon them, and did not oppose them. I believed that the child would be better off in the church than in the court; and I promised to assist her. Marguerite, her faithful and loving servant, was to be a mother to the child, and Francesco was selected to act as tutor and guardian. Francesco had been one of the bravest and most faithful followers of Charles; and he it was who had come home with intelligence of his master's death. Mary of Anjou died, and Francesco and Marguerite went away with the child.

"Sire, I have but little more to add. The son of Charles and Mary was not born for the church. No power of argument or persuasion could bend his mind in that direction. His hand itched for the sword and spear, and his kind tutor finally gave him instruction in the use of arms. How he has improved under that instruction you must judge for yourself. I have only to add, that this noble youth, whom we have called Conrad du Nord, is your own nephew, the only child of Charles of Nantes! Look into his face, sire, and tell me what you read there. Ask Casimir and Sir Philip what they read when first they saw him?"

For a moment all was still, and then the voice of Bertrand broke the spell.

"Fools! idiots!" he cried, "do you believe this foul tissue of priestly lies! Thus shall my sword sunder the false fabric the hoary dotard would build at my expense!"

He had snatched his sword from its scabbard; and, as he spoke, he sprang towards Conrad, intending to run him through; but an eye had been upon him from the first, watching his every movement. Francesco drew his own sword, and stepped before him.

"Back, Bertrand!"

"Out, grey-beard! I want not your blood yet!"

Bertrand aimed a furious blow as the words dropped from his lips, and Francesco had but one way to avoid it. He caught the coming blade upon his guard, and would have rested with bearing the point aside; but he was not permitted so to do. He was before a madman, and his own life was trembling in the balance. The fire flashed in his eye, and the old vigor steeled his arm. Others would have interfered, but there was no time. Blind and furious, and with horrid imprecations upon his lips, the false prince rushed on to his death, for, at the second charge, the blade of the stern old soldier pierced his bosom, and he staggered back, and fell upon the pavement.

"Pardon! pardon!" cried Francesco, throwing down the dripping sword, and sinking upon his knees before the king. "I could not help it."

"Up, up, Francesco," shouted Theobald, starting from his chair, and seizing the old soldier by the hand. "You have done the state a merciful service! Wait here, all of you."

Thus speaking the king turned and left the apartment; and when he came back he brought with him his dead dog, which he laid upon the dais before his chair.

"Behold," he said, shuddering as he spoke, "the dumb companion of my cheerless solitude. This poor animal was poisoned. He died from eating bread which was prepared for the king! Do you ask me who prepared the fatal food? Francesco has just saved the state the need of the poisoner's execution!"

A startling curse broke broke upon the air; and then a cry for mercy.

Dagobert kneeled by the side of the fallen man; but the prayer which dropped from his lips was for a soul departed!

* * * * * *

Up, up, from the darkness of despair to a brighter day!

Rosaline heard a step by her side, and a well-remembered voice whispered her name.

"Conrad!"

"Yes, love."

She saw her father standing near by, and her eager, anxious look he well understood.

"All is well, my child," he said.

And shortly afterwards he told to his daughter the wonderful revelations which had been made.

"And now," said our hero, while a hopeful flush suffused his cheeks, and an expectant light beamed in his eyes, "you must allow me, my lord, to repeat the question which once before I asked. Shall the Lady Rosaline speak my fate?"

"As you will, Conrad. If you choose to trust her, you may rest upon her decision."

Rosaline of Rennes could not throw away the rich treasure of that noble, manly heart; and when Conrad took her hand, and bade her speak in answer to his prayer, she pillowed her head upon his bosom, and whispered for his hearing the sweetest words that had ever thrilled upon his senses.

Such marvellous things as had transpired could not be kept from the people; and when they knew that Bertrand was dead, and that the youthful hero of the Nord was heir to the throne, their joy knew no bounds.

But there was no need of haste in furnishing a new occupant for the throne. With the death of Bertrand was removed a fearful incubus from the life of Theobald; and he arose once more to strength and pride, and reigned in peace for *many years. But finally the measure of his years was full,* and the sceptre fell from his hand.

Then it was that Conrad, in the full vigor of well-trained manhood, stepped upon the topmost round in the ladder of his fortunes; and, blessed by the devoted love of his gentle Rosaline, he won the confidence and affections of his people, and honored the crown which fate had placed upon his head.

THE END.

DEALING WITH HORSE-THIEVES.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

It is not many years since a formidable band of horse-thieves was broken up in Iowa, by a league formed of honest and respectable citizens, mostly farmers, who had been sufferers by the depredations of the villains, and who, for want of lawful means to reach and punish them, resolved to treat them as outlaws, and make fearful examples of such as they might be able to seize and convict. In carrying out this purpose, some terrible scenes were enacted; and some of those who had a part in them, though still convinced they did not overstep the limits of justice, would now gladly be rid of the unpleasant remembrance.

"It is an awful thing to take human life under any circumstances," said Mr. Asa Giddings, the person to whom we are indebted for the facts we now record, "but it seems even more awful to take it without that regular process of law which those born and bred in the long-settled sections of the country are accustomed to witness. Yet what could we farmers of Iowa do to protect ourselves without a resort to extreme measures? Our horses were our property—our property was our main dependence for an honest living—and when we found ourselves beset with robbers, who plundered us with impunity, and might at any time put their knives to our throats, and who, for want of jails to hold and courts to try, might never be brought to respect the rights of others, we felt our only safety lay in organizing ourselves into a body for mutual protection, and inflicting such punishment upon the principal offenders as should strike a wholesome terror to the hearts of all the rest. Under the circumstances, there was but one penalty that would serve our purpose, and that was—*death!*

"We met together, to the number of between three and four hundred, arranged our plans, decided upon our course of action, and proceeded to carry out our measures with that stern, relentless determination necessary to success. Our first great difficulty was in finding out who were our foes. Our horses were being stolen to an alarming extent; nearly every one of us had been sufferers from this cause; I had myself lost five valuable animals, and my nearest neighbor had been deprived of twice as many; and yet who were the thieves? and where were they secreted? It was morally certain that strangers could not come into the country in the night, get possession of our horses, secrete them in it, or ride them out of it, without the assistance of persons living in our midst, and therefore it was a foregone conclusion that the thieves and robbers were living among us, to the number perhaps of a formidable band. There were persons here and there that we suspected; but might there not be many that we did not suspect? and how could we know that some of these had not purposely been robbed of their own horses, and would join our organization merely to cover up their deeds of darkness and act as spies, prepared to use our secrets to the advantage of themselves and confederates?

"A proper consideration of all this previous, to our formation, made those who started the idea of organization very cautious about those they summoned together; but still, for all that, there was at first more or less distrust in our body, and every man was to some extent a spy upon every one that he did not thoroughly know.

"We met in secret, each man well armed, and then we all took a solemn oath, separately and individually, that we were honest in our purpose, that we had never been concerned in any of the robberies, or knew of any one who had, and that we would each keep a watch for the detection of the villains, and disclose to the whole body the name of any person we might suspect, even though he were our nearest kin—father, brother, or son.

"A couple of miles from my house, on a by-road, and in a rather mean-looking shanty, lived two men, related to each other by marriage, whom I had long suspected of having a hand in horse-stealing, though I had no direct proof of the fact, and at our second meeting I stated my suspicions. Immediate action was taken upon this information, and a committee of fifty men, myself among the number, was appointed to secure their arrest, with full power to try them, and, should we find them guilty, to hang them. We all met at an early hour on the following morning, in a wood not far from my dwelling, each man mounted and armed with a rifle, and some with pistols besides. We then divided and approached the house from different directions. As we neared it, I observed a boy, of ten or twelve years, running across a field near the shanty, and entering it in much apparent alarm. On coming up we found only two women, the boy alluded to, and a little girl of about six years. We asked if the men we were in quest of, naming them, were at home, and were answered in the negative. Where had they gone? The women said they didn't know. How long had they been gone? Since yesterday after dinner. When would they return? They couldn't say.

"I noticed that the boy appeared uneasy and agitated, and I called him to me.

"'Are you Mr. Decker's son?' I said.

"'Yes, sir!' in a shy tone of alarm.

"'Do you know me?'

"'Yes, sir—you're Mr. Giddings.'

"'Do you know what I and these men are here for?'

"'I s'pose to arrest father and uncle,' he began to sob.

"'And why do you suppose we want to arrest them?'

"'I don't know, sir.'

"'You do!' said I, sternly; 'and if you don't tell me the truth, I'll take you along with us. Where are your father and uncle?'

"'I don't know, sir.'

"'It is false! you do! they are in the house! and you know you hurried in to inform them we were coming! Say it is true, before I blow your brains out!' cried I, springing from my horse, seizing him roughly, and placing the cold barrel of my pistol against his face.

"The boy screamed, and the women screamed; but I held on to the lad, and in a loud, fierce tone ordered him to speak quickly and tell the truth, before I should lay him dead at my feet—making him believe I was in a terrible passion and about to execute my threat.

"Under the excitement, he sobbed out:

"'Yes, they're in the house.'

"'I knew it,' said I triumphantly, releasing him. 'Surround the house, men!' I ordered; 'we will have them, dead or alive!'

"My words, as I intended they should, had reached the parties we were seeking; and, knowing there was no escape, they now came forth and quietly surrendered themselves into our hands.

"We had resolved to try them in the wood where we had met that morning; but on our way thither—after a very exciting and painful scene at parting from their families—they asked us if we would release them, on condition that they would disclose all they knew. This information being of far more importance to us than their lives, we speedily assured them that, if they would make clean breasts of all their guilty transactions, give us the names of all concerned, and put us in the way of breaking up the whole villainous band, their lives should certainly be spared, and no heavier penalty should be inflicted on them than being exiled from that section of the country. They accepted our conditions, and forthwith made such revelations as enabled us to strike promptly at the very heart of the vile league.

"It was our desire to secure the principal villains first, and make fearful examples of them, believing that by cutting off the roots of the tree the branches would die. To this end we dispatched messengers in all directions to notify the different members of our own body of our success, and request them to meet us at our secret rendezvous on the second night; and then the rest of us, about forty in number, taking our two prisoners with us, proceeded in a body to a house about seven miles distant, to arrest one of the leaders whom our informants believed to be concealed there.

"We reached this place about the middle of the afternoon, and found the doors and shutters all closed and barred, as if no one was within. We surrounded the house, and shouted and knocked, demanding admittance. At first we received no answer; but when it was known that we intended to break in, a rough voice from the inside inquired who we were and what we wanted. A reply was given, stating that we were an organized band for the punishment of horse-thieves, and that we demanded the instant surrender of every person on the premises.

"'There's nobody here that's had anything to do with horse-stealing,' was the rejoinder, 'and if you go for to break in, some on ye'll git killed.'

"'Down with the door, men!' shouted I; 'no use for further parley.'

"We were all determined fellows, and the next moment the door went in with a crash.

"As the foremost were pushing their way into the building, I heard the crack of a rifle and one of our party call out that he was shot. Some half a dozen shots were now fired on our side, and great excitement, noise and confusion followed. I soon ascertained that the man of the house, who had fired first, had been mortally wounded; and shortly after I saw him, bloody and gasping for breath, lying on a bed, with two women hanging over him, bemoaning his fate and calling us his murderers. We searched the house, but did not find the man we wanted. I regretted, as did most of us, that the wounded man had brought this summary punishment upon himself by his rash course; but we doubted not he was guilty of harboring a thief, if not a thief himself, and felt that our acts were justified by the circumstances.

"As there was a probability that the principal villains would escape us unless we made ourselves very active, we were soon on our way to another dwelling, about three miles off, which we reached only to find, sure enough, that the old bird had flown. It being by this time rather late in the afternoon, and no proscribed party within several miles of us, we rode up to a farm-house, got feed for our horses and food for ourselves, and managed to pass the night together very comfortably.

"The next day we were joined by about fifty more of our league, and succeeded in arresting a hoary-headed old rascal, whom we conveyed to our rendezvous—a secluded spot, in a deep, heavy wood—where, as soon as our whole party were assembled, we proceeded to give him a fair trial, in something like regular form. A committee was appointed to conduct the investigation in an open, orderly manner, and twelve men were selected by lot to sit as a jury, and decide the case.

"I have never seen a more impartial and solemn trial. Each man seemed to be be conscious of the great responsibility resting upon himself individually, and upon the whole body collectively; and though all of us felt that we had in a considerable degree been made to suffer from the villainy of the prisoner, yet there was an absence of passion and personal resentment that was quite remarkable under the circumstances. We warned him against any statements or admissions that would criminate himself; we gave him the privilege of cross-questioning the witnesses, and even did it for him; and we offered to listen to any counteracting explanations he might have to make, and carefully examine any witnesses he might produce in his defence.

"The prisoner was a man of perhaps sixty years of age, with iron-gray hair, a cold, gray eye, and stern, inflexible features, who listened to the charges against him with apparently unmoved composure. The evidence against him was direct and positive, and this he never offered to question; and when called upon for his defence, he calmly replied that he had none to make. The jury then retired apart for a few minutes, and returned with a verdict of guilty. As this word fell upon the ears of the prisoner, in a cold, solemn tone, a slight flush for a moment tinged his pale cheeks; but his clear eye never quailed, and he exhibited no other emotion.

"'By the laws of our organization, old man,' said the Chairman of the Committee of Investigation, in a slow, solemn, impressive tone, 'you are by this verdict adjudged to suffer death. Have you any request or preparation you wish to make before the execution of this awful sentence?'

"'If you choose to grant me time to make my will, and divide my property among my heirs, about thirty in number, I'll take it as a favor,' replied the prisoner, as calmly as if we were merely collected together to ask his opinion on the value of a horse.

"After a brief consultation, it was decided that his request could not be granted, and he was so informed.

"'Well,' he rejoined, without the slightest change of countenance, 'I see you're bound to put this business through in the quickest possible time, and I'll not balk you. I'm ready.'

"He stood up and put his hands behind him; and while a cord was being passed around his wrists, and a rope around his neck, he never moved a muscle. The other end of this rope being thrown over the limb of a tree, as many as could, now took hold of it, ready for the fatal signal. It was given, and, amid a breathless silence, the wretched man was run up some fifteen feet, and there held dangling between heaven and earth till his wicked spirit had passed to the eternal world.

"This was the only execution I ever witnessed, and I pray God I may never behold another. The effect of our proceedings was salutary, however, and we soon had the satisfaction of knowing that our section of country was rid of the bold villains that had so long infested it."

THE PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT.

The number of these now standing is between forty and fifty. They are all in what is called Middle Egypt, and are divided into five groups. [illegible] taining the three largest pyramids, is in the vicinity of Ghizeh, not far from Cairo. The loftiest of this group is that of Cheops, so called from the name of the prince by whom it is supposed to have been built. It covers a space of more than thirteen acres of ground. Its perpendicular height is 480 feet, thus making it the highest work of man in the known world. Supposing this pyramid to be entirely solid, which, however, it is not, as has of late years been discovered, its cubic contents would afford material sufficient for building the fronts of a row of houses, fifty feet in height and one hundred yards in thickness, whose length would be thirty-four miles. According to Herodotus, 100,000 men were employed for twenty years in its construction. The remaining pyramids are of smaller dimensions; but they are mostly all, notwithstanding, of immense magnitude. They are not all of stone, some of them being brick. The purpose for which these remarkable edifices were constructed is involved in mystery; even in remotest antiquity their origin was a matter of debate, and nothing certain was known with respect to them or their founders. Most probably they were once a species of tombs and temples; and may be considered as monuments of the religion and piety, as well as the power of the Pharaohs.

THE SINGING OF BIRDS.

How do the blackbird and throssel, with their melodious voices, bid welcome to the cheerful spring, and in their fixed abodes warble forth such ditties as no art of instrument can reach to! Nay, the smaller birds do their like in their particular seasons, as, namely, the laverock, the tit-lark, the little linnet, and the honest robin, that loves mankind both living and dead. But the nightingale breathes such sweet, loud music out of her little instrumental throat, that it might make mankind to think that miracles are not ceased. He that, at midnight, when the very laborer sleeps securely, should hear the clear airs, the sweet descants, the natural rising and falling, the doubling and redoubling of her voice, might well be lifted above earth and say, "Lord, what music hast thou provided for thy saints in heaven, when thou affordest bad men such music on earth!"

EXPERT DIVERS.

Many nations, and particularly the savages of the South Sea and other islands, are remarkable for the expertness which they acquire by habit, in diving and moving about in the water. Being accustomed to it from their infancy, the element becomes so natural to them that they seem to have the use of their faculties in the water, as well as on dry land. According to voyagers, they are such expert divers that when a nail or other piece of iron was thrown overboard, they instantly jumped into the sea after it, and never failed to recover it. On one occasion a smith's anvil is said to have fallen overboard; not being able to bring this up, the islanders contrived to get it ashore by descending a great many times, and rolling it over till it reached the land.

DON'T GET IN DEBT.

Debt is a perfect bore. How it haunts a man from pillar to post—lurking in his breakfast-cup—poisoning his dinner—embittering his tea!—now it stalks from him like a living skeleton, seeming to announce his presence by recounting the amount of liabilities. How it poisons his domestic joys, by intruding its "balance" into the calculation of madam, respecting the price of a new carpet or a dress! How it hinders dreamy plans for accumulations! Botheration! How it hampers useless energies—cripples resolutions too good to be fulfilled!

HYMN OF THE GREEKS FOR THOSE WHO FELL AT THERMOPYLAE.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

We weep for ye! but smiles shall light our tears
With sacred pride through all the coming years,
For with the patriots of our Land each name
Is stamped on holy Ossa's peaks of fame;—
Mother's, kiss your dead boys!

II.

How glorious our olden heroes dwell
Beyond dark Styx on fields of asphodel!
With them, all laurel-wreathed, ye'll ever be
In those ambrosial valleys of eternity!—
Mars, on the spirits smile!

III.

What boundless joy, what fadeless splendor there,
Make more elysian the Elysium's air
When ye remember that ye were of those
Who hurled black death on sacred Greece's foes!—
Harps, sing their worth!

IV.

O gloomy souls, each on his laureled might,
Gleam o'er that dark, dread stream your smiles of light:
And if in us should pale the patriot-flames,
Breathe, breathe your own immortal names!—
Mars, walk through Greece!

FREAKS OF THE GUILLOTINE.

FROM THE FRENCH BY ALICE STIRLING.

We had all assembled in the large drawing-room, after dinner; the pale moon shining through the uncurtained windows, and the flickering blaze of the wood fire were our only lights. The conversation turned upon a statement made that day, in the presence of one of our party, by a man who had brutally murdered his wife by cutting off her head with one blow. This man maintained that the head, after being entirely severed from the trunk, had spoken to him. The doctor ridiculed the idea.

"You believe, then," said M. Ledru, "that M. Guillotin was right in affirming that his machine was the surest, the most rapid and the least painful method of terminating human life?"

"Most certainly."

"Permit me to say that you are mistaken."

"On what ground?"

Something in the tone of M. Ledru had induced us to gather about the two gentlemen, and to listen with eager attention to their conversation.

"It is an easy matter to demonstrate to any one," resumed M. Ledru, "who has any accurate notion of the structure of the human frame, that all sensation is not instantaneously destroyed by the ax. That, however, Doctor, is not at present my intention. My opinions are not mere theories, but are founded upon facts—facts that have come under my own personal observation. Let me begin by citing the well known historical incident connected with the death of Charlotte Corday.

"I was present at her execution.

"At two in the afternoon I took my post near the Statue of Liberty. It was a warm day in July. The atmosphere was heavy, and threatening clouds gathered rapidly in the sky. At four the first thunder was heard, at the moment, it was said, that Charlotte left her prison. She had been torn from her cell while a young artist was making a sketch of her. He entreated her jailors for ten minutes more; but they, as if determined that even her portrait should not exist, were deaf to his words. [illegible] in torrents; the bursts of thunder shook the ground on which the multitude stood; but nothing could disperse the curious crowd. The women greeted Charlotte with yells and curses. I heard the roar of the infuriated populace, and felt them swaying from side to side before I could see any thing. Presently the cart appeared, and I saw the condemned woman for the first time. She was a beautiful girl of twenty-seven years, with magnificent eyes. Her nose and lips were wonderfully regular. She stood upright. Her head thrown back, not so much with the scorn implied by her attitude as by the manner in which her hands were tied behind her back.

"The rain had ceased to fall; but the three quarters of an hour in which she had been exposed to its fury had served to saturate the woollen robe she wore, which now clung to her perfect figure, permitting its rounded, undulating grace to be clearly visible. This loose red garment, in which she had been clothed by her executioner, gave a singular expression and marvellous splendor to the haughty head crowned by the wealth of dark glossy hair. As she reached La Place the rain ceased, as I have said; and a ray of sunlight piercing the clouds, rested on her hair and shone about her head like a halo.

"I assure you, murderess as she was, and much as I abhorred the crime, I found it difficult to decide whether the fearful scene about to be enacted was a punishment or a martyrdom. When her eyes rested on the scaffold she turned slightly pale; but she quickly recovered her self-possession, and smiled as she looked at the guillotine. The cart stopped. Charlotte permitted no one to assist her as she ascended the steps of the scaffold, slippery from the rain. She moved quickly, though encumbered by the long trailing folds of the robe she wore. When the executioner touched her throat as he made an attempt to remove the hankerchief about it, she turned pale again; but, as before, a sweet smile followed to give the lie to this indication of cowardice, and she herself, without a moment's hesitation, placed her head on the block. The ax fell, the head rolled on the platform below; and now mark my words, doctor, and you too, poet, listen to me!—it was then that a man, one of the assistant executioners, Legros by name, lifted this head by the hair, and, with vile adulation to the populace, struck it on the cheek. Hear! That face blushed; not only the cheek that received the blow, but both, and the brow even to the roots of the hair, were crimsoned with the deep glow. For the head of Charlotte Corday was still conscious, and knew and felt the indignity to which she was subjected.

"The people saw this blush, and they took the part of the dead against the living—of the victim against the executioner—and shouted for vengeance. The wretch was carried off to prison.

"One moment more," said M. Ledru, as the doctor was about to speak. "This is not all. I wished to know what motives this man had for the disgraceful act he had committed, and obtained permission from the authorities to visit him at the *Abbaye*, where he was confined. He could not comprehend why he was punished for a thing which seemed to him, as he said, *so natural*.

"When I asked his reasons for his act he laughed aloud.

"'I belong to the Marat party, and I wished to punish her on my own account.'

"'But,' said I, 'do you not understand that such a violation of the respect due to the dead is almost a crime?'

"'What!' said Legros, 'do you believe that those who have been guillotined die at once?'

"'Unquestionably!'

"'Then you had better take a look into the basket where they all lie together! Then you could see them frown and grind their teeth for five or ten minutes after the execution; and I should not be at all surprised some fine day to hear one of the aristocrats—one of the heads, you understand—shout out 'Vive le Roi.'

"I knew all that I wished to know, and went away pursued by an idea. If it were true that these heads lived after being severed from their bodies, I determined to ascertain the fact for myself."

During this recital of M. Ledru's, the salon had grown very dark. No one spoke; no one moved to ring for candles lest he should cease speaking; for we all understood that this account of Charlotte Corday's execution was only an introduction to something still more terrible.

After a few moments silence, M. Ledru resumed:

I left the Abbaye, and, as I crossed La Place Turenne, I heard the shriek of a woman. I quickened my steps, and saw by the faint moonlight a woman struggling in the grasp of the night patrol. She saw me, and instantly detecting by my air and costume that I was not precisely a man of the people, threw herself into my arms.

"M. Albert!" she cried, "tell them you know me, and that I am the daughter of Mother Ledieu, the washerwoman;" and she held me with a firm grasp, as the shipwrecked sailor clutches the plank that floats between him and eternity.

"You may be the daughter of Mother Ledieu, little one," cried a rough sans culotte; "but you have not your certificate of citizenship, and so you may just make up your mind to go with us."

The girl shuddered. I felt all the terror and despair of the long quivering sigh I heard.

As she had called me by the first name that occurred to her, so I in my turn used the first that presented itself to me.

"What! is it you, my poor Lolange! What is the matter?"

"There! do you see, gentlemen?" she said.

"It seems to me you would do better to call us citizens."

"Listen, sir," said the young girl; "it is not my fault if I speak thus. My mother's customers all belonged to the great world; she taught me to be polite, and I contracted unfortunate habits of civility; but will do my best to get rid of them."

In this reply there was a ray of mockery that I only perceived. I wondered who this woman could be. One thing I was quite sure of—she was the daughter of no washerwoman.

"You ask me, Citizen Albert, what the matter is," continued the young girl. "I have been to carry my linen home; the mistress of the house was out, and I waited for her to return that I might obtain the money; for in these times we need all the money we can earn. It grew very late. I had gone out without my certificate, expecting to return before dark; and hurrying home, I was stopped by these gentlemen—excuse me—citizens. They wished to carry me to prison. I screamed, and you appeared—an old acquaintance. I have told you everything now. He knows that my name is Lolange, and who I am, and will answer for me."

"Certainly," said I, "I will answer for her."

"Very good," said the head of the patrol; "but who, Master Upstart, will answer for you?"

"Danton—if that will suit you. Is he a good patriot?"

"Ah! that is another thing. If he answers for you, I have nothing more to say."

"Very well; take me to the club-house 'Les Cordeliers,' where he is to-night."

The club-house was not far off, and we arrived there in a moment. I tore a leaf from my pocket-book, and writing a few words in pencil, I begged the porter to send them to Danton.

Danton appeared.

"What! you under arrest?—you, my friend—Camille's friend!—you, one of the best republicans in the world! I will certify to him," said he, turning to the sergeant mounting guard over me.

"Very well, sir; but will you certify also to the woman?" persisted the obstinate sergeant.

"Yes, to him and her—to everybody connected with him. Now are you satisfied?"

"I am satisfied; and particularly so because I have seen you. Will you shake hands with me?"

"Most assuredly," said Danton, giving him his hand.

"Long live Danton!" cried the sergeant.

"Long live Danton!" repeated the whole patrol, waving their red caps enthusiastically.

I stood alone at the door of the club-house with my unknown.

"Now," said I, "where shall I have the pleasure of taking you?"

"To Mother Ledieu," she answered, with a gay laugh. "You know she is my mother! and she lives in La Rue Feron No. 24."

We turned the corner of street after street, without exchanging a syllable. Only by the light of the moon, now shining unobscured by a single cloud, I examined her at my ease.

She was a slender, graceful creature, not more than twenty-two or three, with large, blue eyes, more spirited than melancholy—laughing lips, and teeth like pearls; and even the common garb of Mother Ledieu's daughter had something aristocratic in its air, which I was not surprised to find had awakened the suspicions of the band of sans-culottes.

We stood before the unopened door, and looked at each other.

"Have you nothing to say to me, Monsieur Albert?" said my unknown, with a smile.

In a brief conversation I learned that she was the daughter of an aristocrat, then in concealment, and from a visit to whom she was returning when the patrol arrested her. Mother Ledieu's husband had been her father's coachman, and hence the protection they afforded her. Her name she would not reveal, but told me to call her Lolange, and she would call me Albert in return. I promised to get her a certificate from the authorities, and give it to her the next evening, and also to see if I could not do something for her father. I accordingly called the next evening at ten, at Mother Ledieu's, and promptly at the moment Lolange appeared. I gave her the certificate and then said:

"Listen to me. I have been to-day to see General Marceau. He leaves Paris to-morrow, and has promised to take your father with him as secretary, if he will first give his word of honor to serve in no capacity against France. Once away from Paris, your father will have little difficulty in getting to England."

"But my father knows nothing of all this," said Lolange.

"No, but we must go together and at once; you have your certificate and my own."

"True," said she. And we hurried off in the direction of the Place Turenne. When we reached the spot where we had first met she withdrew her arm.

"Wait for me here," she said, and disappeared.

In a few minutes she returned, and with the words "My father wishes to see you," she turned the corner of La Rue Saint Guillaume. She took a key from her pocket and opened a door in the wall, and passing along a narrow alley, entered a house and mounted to the second story, and knocked at a door in a particular way.

A man of about fifty appeared. He was in a workman's blouse and seemed to be a bookbinder; but at the first words the man of rank and cultivation appeared.

I told him all, and demanded only a promise that he would never bear arms against France. I bade him come at once to the house of Marceau's sister.

"Will you accompany me?" he asked.

"I will follow you to take care of mademoiselle when you have entered the house."

"But how can Marceau know that I am the person of whom you spoke?"

"Give him this tri-colored cockade—it is the sign agreed upon."

"And what shall I do for my liberator?"

"Confide your daughter to my care."

He shook my hand heartily, and we descended the steep stairs. At the door his daughter took his arm, and I followed them. We reached Gen. Marceau's dwelling without meeting any one.

"It is a good sign," I said. "Now, do you wish me to wait here or shall I enter with you?"

"No; wait here for my daughter; once more," said he, "permit me to make a feeble attempt to express my gratitude." I pressed his hand. Lolange followed him into the house; in ten minutes she appeared.

"Your friend," she whispered, "is truly worthy of your friendship; he understood that the dearest wish of my heart was to remain with him until the last moment. I shall stay here, therefore, until to-morrow at three; and if at ten in the evening you wish to receive the grateful thanks of a girl whose father you have saved, come to La Rue Feron."

"Did your father send me no message?" I asked.

"His thanks, and the request that you would send me to him as soon as possible."

"Whenever you choose," said I, with a pang.

"First, however," she answered, with a smile. "I must know where to find my dear father."

I took her hand, but, hardly knowing what I did, I drew her close to me and kissed her fresh lips. She made no resistance. I felt her heart beat against mine, and was happy.

The next evening Lolange appeared radiant with joy.

"He is saved!" she cried. And throwing her arms about my neck: "I love you," she exclaimed. "I love you, for you have saved his life!"

In three weeks, Lolange received a letter announcing her father's safe arrival in England. The day after, I took her a passport. In receiving it, Lolange burst into tears.

"You do not love me!" she exclaimed.

"I love you more than life; but I have given my word to your father, and I cannot break it."

"Then," said she, "I shall break mine. If you have the courage to let me go, Albert, I have not the courage to leave you."

Alas! she remained.

CHAPTER II.

Three months had passed since the evening that I had carried the passport to Lolange, and not a word had since been uttered between us in regard to her departure.

Lolange took a room in La Rue Turenne—or rather I had taken it in her name, the name of Lolange. I knew her by no other. I had also obtained a situation as a teacher in a school for her, where I thought she would be secure from the revolutionary police, now more vigilant than ever.

Sundays and Thursdays we passed together in this little room in "La Rue Turenne;" from its windows we could look down on the spot where we first met; and every day we wrote to each other. Never had I been so happy.

I had not, however, renounced the idea that entered my mind the day of my conversation with the executioner. I asked and obtained permission to make various experiments as to the continuance of sensation and life after execution; and all my experiments proved to me that there was much truth in what the man had told me. Unfortunately there was no scarcity of subjects; thirty or forty persons were guillotined each day; and so great a quantity of blood was shed on "La Place de la Revolution," that it was found necessary to make a ditch about the scaffold several feet in depth.

This ditch was covered with planks; one of them turned under the foot of a child, of some eight or ten years, who was drowned in this hideous pool!

I took care that Lolange never discovered in what way I passed the days that were not spent with her. I must acknowledge that I felt at first a strong repugnance to these remains of poor humanity; but I reminded myself that my studies and experiments might be of value to the whole human race. I made notes most carefully, and at the end of two months I decided to call in the aid of galvanism and electricity. The authorities had given me a little chapel in the corner of the cemetery of *Clamant*, and I had arranged a laboratory within it. You know, after man had driven kings from their palaces, he drove God from His churches! There I had an electrical battery, and two or three of those instruments called "*excitateurs*."

I selected from the carts two or three bodies and two or three heads; the remainder were thrown into one common pit. The next day the heads and bodies upon which I had experimented the night before were added to them. My brother generally assisted me in my labors.

In the midst of all this frightful association with death, my love for Lolange increased daily, and she, poor child, loved me with her whole soul.

Her father had given his consent to our marriage, and we only postponed it until it was safe to disclose her real name—the name was that of a proscribed aristocrat, and involved certain death to her if she were discovered.

A frightful event now took place that saddened both our hearts. This was the trial of Marie Antoinette. On the 14th October she was called before the court; on the 16th, at four in the morning, she received her sentence; the same day, at eleven, she mounted the scaffold.

That morning I received a letter from Lolange, saying that she could not pass a day like that without seeing me. At two o'clock I went to our room in La Rue Turenne, and found Lolange in tears. I too was deeply affected by this execution. The queen in my youth had been so good to me, that I had always preserved a vivid recollection of her kindness. Shall I ever forget that day?—it was a Wednesday; more than a mist of sadness hung over Paris—a cloud of positive terror!

I was profoundly depressed; a presentiment of evil weighed upon me. I endeavored to strengthen Lolange, who wept in my arms; but words failed me, because I had no consolation, no hope in my heart. The night was more sad than the day. I remember that a dog howled perpetually until four in the morning; the next day we were told that his master had gone out carrying the key, he had been arrested in the street; condemned at three, executed at four.

We were compelled to separate; the class taught by Lolange assembled at nine—the school was near le Jardin des Plantes. I had a hard struggle to let her go; she herself could not make up her mind to leave me. But to remain away for two days was to invite investigations that might prove very dangerous. I called a carriage and went with her to the corner of La Rue des Fosses Saint Bernard; there I alighted. During the whole drive she sobbed convulsively and it was difficult for me to restrain my own tears. I stood nailed to the ground watching the coach. Suddenly it stopped. Lolange called me. I ran to her once more and kissed her. Once did I say? a hundred times! The clock struck nine. I kissed away her tears, and hastily leaping from the carriage, hastened away.

I thought Lolange called to me; but fearful of exciting notice, I closed my ears to her voice, and had the fatal courage not to turn back again. I passed the day in writing to her, and in the evening sent her a volume. When I returned from posting my letter, I found one from her.

She had been severely lectured; and they had even threatened to deprive her of her usual days of liberty. If it came to that, she said, she should break with the mistres of the establishment. She added that she thought, from the appearance of a letter from her father awaiting her arrival, that the seal had been tampered with.

I passed a frightful night, and a worse day. I wrote as usual to Lolange; and at three went for my brother to accompany me to *Clamant*. He was not at home, and I went alone.

The weather was frightful; the rain fell in torrents, and the chill wind indicated that winter was near at hand. As I walked along I heard the public criers shouting out the list of the condemned of that day. There were men, women and children. The bloody harvest was abundant; and I felt sure that the subjects for my experiments would be in readiness for me that night.

The days were short—at four o'clock it was almost dark.

The cemetery with its freshly made graves—its naked trees, with their branches creaking in the wind—all gave me a thrill of horror. The pit yawned for that day's victims; it was larger than usual, for the grave-diggers had been ordered to make it so. I approached it mechanically, and looked in; it was half full of water. I thought of the poor naked bodies that were to be thrown into this water as cold as themselves! My foot slipped, and I nearly fell into the pit. My hair stood on end; and chilled and wet I went to my laboratory.

It was, as I have said, an ancient chapel. I looked about it, and why? I know not. But on neither wall, on what had once been the altar, did I see any token of the religion which had once sanctified the spot. The wall was naked, the altar a mere table; where once God had been served, eternal life preached—was now a skull—the emblem of Death!

I lighted the candle, and placed it on my table, covered with strange looking tools—my own inventions; and I thought of the poor queen whom I had once seen so beautiful, so happy and beloved—whom yesterday I had seen driven in a cart to the scaffold, and whose headless trunk now reposed in the tomb of the mendicants—she who had once slumbered under the golden draperies of the Tuileries, Versailles and St. Cloud!

Suddenly, amid the noise of the storm, I heard a well known rumbling; it was not thunder—it was the cart bearing the fearful burthen from "La Place de la Revolution" to Clamant. The door of the little chapel opened, and two men, dripping with water, entered. In their arms was a large sack. One of these men was Legros, whom I had visited in prison.

"Look here, M. Ledru," said he—"this is your property; but you can have the whole batch; it pours so, we are not going to bury the good people until to-morrow. I don't believe they will take cold if they are exposed to the night air!" and with a hideous chuckle the two men placed the sack in the corner, near the ancient altar.

Then they went out without shutting the door that creaked lugubriously on its rusty hinges, and permitting the entrance of gusts of wind that nearly extinguished my candle.

I heard them detatch their horses and depart, leaving the tumbril full of dead bodies standing in the cemetery. I wished to go with them, but something prevented me, a feeling which I could not have analyzed. I was no longer afraid—but I was bewildered.

Suddenly a voice, at once sweet and mournful—a voice within my little chapel uttered the name of "Albert." I started up—"Albert!" Only one person in the world could call me thus.

My eyes wandered about the small room, which, small as it was, was lighted but dimly by my solitary candle, and fixed themselves on the sack—the cloth stained with blood indicated its contents.

At the moment my eyes rested on the sack—the same voice but fainter still, sadder still, repeated the same name "Albert!"

I started forward—this voice came from the interior of that sack—but sick with terror, and a vague presentiment, I stood still—then summoning all my resolution—like a machine, like a man of marble I went to the sack and closing my eyes, plunged my hand into its mouth.

Then I decidedly felt that lips still warm, were pressed upon my hand. I was in such a state of terror that its very excess gave me a fictitious courage—I lifted the head and staggering back to my arm-chair—placed it on the table.

Ah! the intolerable agony of that moment! The head whose lips were still red, still warm, was the head of Lolange!

I thought myself mad. I called three times "Lolange! Lolange! Lolange!"

At the third time, the eyes opened, looked at me, a tender light flashed from them, and they closed never to open again in this world.

I was mad—wild with anger, despair and horror; I wished to fly; but in rising I pushed the table over, with it the candle, and the head that rolled at my feet. I fell to the floor, the head rolled towards mine, its lips met mine, an icy shiver passed over me and I fainted.

The next day I was found as cold as the marble on which I lay.

Lolange, recognized by her father's letter, had been arrested, condemned and executed on that day.

This head that had spoken to me, these eyes which had looked at me, the lips that had kissed mine, were the lips, the eyes, the head of Lolange—the lips, the eyes, the head of the woman who was my affianced wife.

FREAKS OF THE RUSSIAN WILD HORSE.

In the steppes of Russia it is not rare to see a two-year old colt rush singly to attack a band of four or five wolves, kill one or two of them, lame the rest, and spread the terror of his name throughout the country. The wild horse strikes with his fore feet, like the stag, and not with his hind legs, as is popularly believed. He draws himself up to his full height against his enemy, and pounds him beneath his murderous pestles; then seizes him between the shoulders with his formidable incisors, and tosses him to his mares, to make sport for themselves and their offspring.

◆

Decision of Character.—There is nothing more to be esteemed than a manly firmness and decision of character. We all like a person who knows his own mind and sticks to it; who sees at once what is to be done in given circumstances and does it. He does not beat about the bush for difficulties or excuses, but goes the shortest and most effectual way to obtain his own ends, or to accomplish a useful object. If he can serve you he will; if he cannot he will say so.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

Words and deeds are perhaps indifferent moods of the divine energy. Words are also actions, and actions are a kind of words.

Woman was taken from man's side, and the wound was not entirely sewed up. He has had to have an occasional stitch in his side ever since.

The strongest man feels the influence of woman's gentlest thoughts as the mightiest oak quivers in the softest breeze.

Many men, if baited with a real fact or two, will jump at the merest rag of a lie, or even at the bare hook.

We live amid surfaces, and the art of life is to skate well on them.

The grossest ignorance does not disgust a sensible man like impudent knowingness.

Life is a series of surprises, and it would not be worth taking or keeping if it were not.

The universe is the bride of the soul. All private sympathy is partial.

The most beautiful of altars is the soul of an unhappy man, who is comforted and thanks God.

The two highest functionaries of the state are the schoolmaster and the nurse.

Winter too often changes into stone the water of heaven and the heart of man.

To lie a little is not possible; he who lies, lies an entire lie.

To travel is to be born and to die at every instant.

It is a terrible thing that sickness extemporizes old age.

In the race for wealth, we tug and toil and moil to arrive—nowhere.

Every great soul has more hidden wealth than ever Captain Kidd had.

A missionary in any cause should not only keep himself pure, but be a disinfectant.

Hunger is a great demoralizer, and rags are the ally of the devil.

Every man who cheats, or slanders, or steals, adds to the aggregate guilt of the nation.

Men don't now live, like Diogenes, in a tub, but a great many make tubs of themselves.

To pluck thorns from the bosoms of others is to plant roses in our own.

The next thing to a direct tax on lying would be a tax on gravestones.

That man is rich who is dowered with a hate of hate, a scorn of scorn, and the love of love.

Of all the dust thrown in men's eyes, gold dust is the most blinding.

Mortified pride often takes the name and guise of a broken heart.

The most certain preventive of home-sickness is a scolding wife.

Be whatever you will, but, first of all, be yourself.

Most female writers are tiring-women, and, what seems paradoxical, tiring men.

Most men love the conflicting sex, and all men love to be told they do.

Many who in the street seem angels are in their houses devils.

There is no cream like that which rises on spilled milk.

There is no danger in sharp truth if the sheath of love is thick enough.

Sufficient for the right is the ornament of being right.

Praise may be as hurtful as censure. It is as well to be cast into a pit as blown into the air.

Those who before a glass look most at themselves, are apt to know least of themselves.

A great mind, without the nutrition of adversity, would starve.

We confess small faults by way of insinuating that we have no great ones.

The best preachers are those that preach by example.

Slander is a coward's revenge; dissimulation his defence.

CURRENT ITEMS

Sarah Neumann, a deaf and dumb girl, living in the upper part of the city, was run over in the street, a few days since, by an express wagon, which she did not see coming. The driver called to her to get out of the way, not having the least idea that she could not hear him, and supposing that she would step one side, and did not discover his error till it was too late to prevent the accident. Fortunately, the poor girl was not seriously injured.

There is a story current in Wall street circles, that "an outsider," who had never been suspected of possessing much talent for financiering, has made about a million and a half of dollars in stock operations within the last ten or twelve months, off of a capital of one thousand dollars which he borrowed to commence the speculation with.

Orestes Guadaloupe, as he stated his name to be, was detected one morning recently in stealing newspapers from the door-steps of subscribers, where the carriers had left them, and was sent to prison to await the action of the authorities having charge of such matters.

A little girl who, with several others, was amusing herself by walking over the joists laid in the basement of a house in process of erection in Carleton avenue, Brooklyn, fell to the bottom of the cellar, and, striking upon a lot of broken bricks and stones, was very badly hurt.

Fernald Montgrierson, a sailor on board of an English vessel lying in the harbor, fell from the deck into the hold, one morning lately, and was so badly crushed that he had to have one leg amputated, and it was supposed that he would probably die from the effect of the injuries.

A boy was killed in Baxter street, one evening lately, by being hit on the head by a fragment of an iron pot which was thrown into the street from the upper window of some building. As no one saw whence the missile came, the perpetrator of the homicide could not be discovered.

Half-a-dozen or more vagrant girls, from ten to fourteen years old, were arrested the other evening for theft and vicious conduct generally, and put in the way of being sent where their reformation would be possible. It was shocking to witness the horrid depravity which some of these young creatures were capable of.

A man was accidentally shot in the wrist of his left hand by the discharge of a pistol which he was holding in his right, one morning not long since. He was not versed in the use of arms, and in attempting to display great familiarity with the revolver he occasioned the accident.

A woman, carrying a child in her arms, got entangled among the rush and crush of vehicles at the junction of Broadway and Fulton street, one afternoon lately, and becoming frightened and bewildered she began to sob violently, whereupon a policeman went to her rescue and extricated her from her alarming situation.

A man was shot, one evening not long since, in Grand street, by a "friend" who had become jealous of him, and who fired three pistol balls into his head, killing him instantly. The homicide was taken in custody, admitted that he killed the deceased, and was locked up to await the action of the grand jury.

Three or four unruly school children attempted to climb in at the windows of an unoccupied house, on their way home from school, one day recently, and a window coming down upon the neck of one of them, just as he had got his head inside, he was nearly strangled before he could be extricated.

It is rumored that the Government is having an iron-clad ship of war built, which will combine the excellencies of the regular line-of-battle ship and the Monitor, and "walk the waters like a thing of life" while hurling destruction on every side.

Several boys were amusing themselves by throwing stones at one another, the other afternoon, in the Park, when one of them was hit so violently on the leg with a large fragment of rock that the bone was shattered.

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PREPARATIONS OF THE CONFEDERACY TO RE-OPEN THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE.

ANOTHER INTERCEPTED DESPATCH.

ARTICLE SECOND.

BY EDWARD EVERETT.

One of the most characteristic features of the Confederacy is the insincerity of its pretexts and professions. Nothing more audacious can be found in political history. Thus it claimed to be founded on the right of every sovereign State, which has entered into a union to secede at pleasure. Their new constitution is identical with that of the United States, in every thing that can be supposed to bear on such a right, and most certainly State-rights are not less carefully provided for by the former than by the latter. Two years had not elapsed from the organization of the Confederate government, before its President orders the expulsion of two foreign consular agents from the country at a day's notice, simply for asking the governor and a senator of Texas if it would not be for the advantage of that State to secede!

Again, the pretended motive for seceding urged at home is, that the institution of slavery in the Southern States is menaced by the growing strength of the anti-slavery sentiment in the free States, which has resulted at last in the choice of an anti-slavery President. After having wrought their deluded followers to madness on this subject, they send their emissaries abroad, and in order to deprive the government and the loyal people of the Union of the sympathy of Europe, they maintain that slavery has nothing to do with the controversy; that it was perfectly safe under the old Constitution; that the tariff was the great grievance; that what they mainly wished was free trade; that as to slavery, they meant to mitigate its hardships *as fast as possible, and in due time abolish it altogether*; and that the African Slave-trade, which is only forbidden by law under the old Union, is forbidden by the Constitution of the Confederacy!

Can anything go beyond the audacious fraud of these pretences? Yes, there is a degree of dishonesty which transcends them. Europe, either believing these professions, which seems indeed hardly possible, or in order to take the secessionists in their own snare, begins gently to intimate a wish, that a stipulation against re-opening the African Slave-trade should be incorporated in any future act of recognition. This suggestion has thrown the Confederate Government into a panic, not unlike that produced on the subject of the secession of Texas. Founded on slavery as on a corner stone, with a vast unsettled back country behind them, and dreaming of the subjugation of Mexico and Central America, the leaders of the Confederacy contemplate, as a cardinal feature of their policy, the re-opening of the Slave-trade on a scale of unprecedented magnitude. The suggestion of making a prohibition of that traffic the condition on which Europe will recognize their independence, has accordingly filled the leaders with dismay; and the subtlety of their Secretary of State (Mr. Benjamin) has been put in requisition to parry the blow. The manner in which this is attempted to be done, may be seen in his intercepted letter of the 15th January, 1863, to Mr. Lamar, the Confederate emissary at St. Petersburg, similar instructions being given to their other agents abroad. The letter is published in the National Intelligencer of the 31st March last, and a choicer specimen of rigmarole will not easily be found. It forbids Mr. Lamar to enter into any negotiations, which may be proposed, for the purpose of stipulating for the prohibition of the African Slave-trade, and the reason assigned is, that the constitution gives the Confederate government no power over the subject. It is true, it prohibits the Slave-trade, and directs their Congress "to pass such laws as shall effectually prevent the same." One would suppose that these very provisions of the constitution would furnish the best possible warrant to the treaty-making power for engaging the faith of the country, by formal stipulation with foreign governments. But the sagacity of Secesssion spells everything backward, and because the traffic is forbidden by their constitution, and because Congress is required to pass laws to prevent it, *therefore*, the treaty-making power is barred from entering into any stipulations on the subject with foreign powers!

The absurdity of this argument is too glaring to merit exposure. The strict constructionists of the Virginia school of politicians used to maintain, that the execution of treaties affecting subjects of a legislative character, was subject to the discretion of Congress; but that the fact that Congress was specifically required to legislate on a subject prevented the treaty-making power from entering into stipulations with a foreign government to effect the same object, is an extravagance reserved for secession.

Such, however, is the case; and the object of Mr. Benjamin's intercepted letter is to forbid the Confederate agents abroad from entering into any stipulations against the African Slave-trade. In its conclusion, he says: "We trust therefore that no unnecessary discussions on this matter will be introduced into your negotiations. If, unfortunately, this reliance should prove ill-founded, you will decline continuing negotiations on your side, and transfer them to us at home, where in such event, they could be conducted with greater facility and advantage, under the direct supervision of the President." With what facility or to what advantage a negotiation could *anywhere* be conducted, on a subject which is by the constitution excluded from negotiation, is not so clear.

It will readily occur to the reader, that nothing but a foregone determination to re-open the trade, would have led the Confederate government, anxious as it is to obtain the recognition of foreign powers, thus to refuse to pledge the public faith against its re-opening, even as a condition of recognition.

But it may be asked, inasmuch as the Confederate constitution forbids the importation of Slaves from Africa, how *can* the trade be re-opened? This question is easily answered. When the constitution was framed, the Confederacy embraced only the cotton-growing States, and the great object was to draw the border States, and especially Virginia as the most influential of them, into the vortex. The domestic Slavetrade is the great interest of Virginia; it yields her thirty millions a year; and is the most important branch of her commerce. When the constitution of the Confederacy was in process of formation at Montgomery, it was declared, without reserve, that if Virginia and the other Border States refused to join the Cotton States, the domestic Slave-trade should be prohibited; *the clause of the constitution which forbids the foreign Slave-trade, should be abrogated*; and the necessary supply, which was estimated by the committee of the Carolina legislature at 30,000 or 40,000 slaves annually, should be drawn from Africa. In the very moment of organizing the Confederate government, although the African Slave-trade was forbidden, the prohibition was accompanied by a further provision, that their Congress should have power "to prohibit the introduction of slaves from any State not a member of, or territory not belonging to, the Confederacy." It was mainly by this clause that Virginia was whipped into the rebellion.

When therefore Mr. Benjamin elaborately descants on the difficulty of amending the Constitution, as an assurance that nothing of that kind will be thought of, he forgets, or rather imagines that the world will forget, that a threat to amend this provision of the Constitution was coeval with its adoption; and that having once done its work of drawing Virginia into the rebellion, there is nothing to prevent its abrogation, and the re-opening the African Slave-trade, *whenever the supposed interest of the Cotton and Sugar growing States shall predominate in the Councils of the Confederacy over the Slave-breeding interests of the Border Slave States.*

Whether therefore the foreign Slave-trade is to be re-opened under an amendment (?) of that feature of the Confederate Constitution which prohibits it, depends simply on the balance of power between the Cotton and Sugar growing and the Border Slave States. Thus far the former, by the sheer force of audacity of purpose, and violence of action, and of capacity on the part of the leaders, have prevailed, and Virginia has been reluctantly compelled to follow in their train. The mass of her citizens were earnestly opposed to secession, and if three persons (who can be named) had not been individually gained over by the leaders of the movement in the Cotton growing States, Virginia would have adhered to the Union. It was necessary to bribe her by the promise to remove the capital of the Confederacy to Richmond, and to alarm her by a menace that the African Slave-trade should be re-opened and the domestic Slave-trade prohibited, before she was finally engineered into the Confederacy.

It is possible, however, that the influence of Virginia and of the other Border Slave States may, for a considerable time, prevail over that of the Cotton and Sugar growing States, and prevent the alteration of the Constitution. To *meet this condition of things*, the leaders in those States, for the accomplishment of their magnificent project of building up a vast Slaveholding empire in the tropical regions, have another expedient in reserve, and that is this notable doctrine of Secession, which in their constitutional theory, is the inalienable right of every sovereign State. It is well known that they professed with reference to the Union to regard it as a peaceable measure; the Government of the United States (they held) would have no right to oppose it; it was at all times as much within the discretion of a State to withdraw from the Union as to enter it.

The wonder-working power of this doctrine was, of course, not exhausted when the States composing the Confederacy assumed to break away from the Union. As all their public law rests upon it, it can never be called in question or opposed by them. Whenever, therefore, it becomes the interest of a considerable minority to re-open the African Slave-trade, nothing will be necessary but that some one State should *secede*—South Carolina, Louisiana, or Texas, for instance—and throw open her ports to the importation of slaves from Africa. No attempt will be made by their sister Cotton and Sugar-growing States to enforce the laws against the domestic Slave-trade, and in this way the African Slave-trade will be re-established as extensively as the commercial success of the enterprise may warrant and the demands of the new Empire may require. Secession being a peaceable measure and entirely within the competence of each and every State, the resort to it for this purpose will not affect the friendly relations between the seceding States and the rest of the Confederacy; and, in fact, the whole movement will probably be collusive. There will be a previous understanding with one of the States, most probably South Carolina, that she shall secede for this purpose, with some suitable arrangement that her political relations with her sister States are, in other respects, to remain unchanged. If it is found that any laws which may have been passed by the Confederate Congress throw obstacles in the way of procuring slaves through this channel, it will, of course, be competent for each and every State to *nullify* those laws within its borders, that process being another of the beautiful engines, contrived in the Calhoun foundry, to reduce a government of civilized men to an earthly pandemonium of anarchy.

That a process of this kind is in distinct contemplation was made apparent in the elaborate letter of Mr. Spratt of South Carolina to Mr. Perkins of Louisiana, published in the *Charleston Mercury* of February 13, 1861. Mr. Spratt is an acknowledged leader of the Secession policy; unanimously elected by the people of Charleston to the Convention which decreed the secession of South Carolina, and was deputed by that body to secure the co-operation of Florida. His letter is an emphatic protest against the provision of the Confederate Constitution which prohibits the African Slave-trade, and it ominously and confidently predicts that, if that prohibition is adhered to, it will be swept away by another revolution. I would earnestly request such of my readers as may doubt the reality of these far-seeing projects for the revival of the African Slave-trade, to read the extracts from Mr. Spratt's letter in the *National Intelligencer* of the 2d of April last, or still better the whole letter in the *Intelligencer* of the 19th February, 1861.

I call it a "*far-reaching*" project, but in the intention of the leaders of the rebellion, its execution is to be delayed only till their recognition as an independent government has been effected. In the face of the promises they have had the assurance to give to foreign powers of their intention to adhere to the constitutional prohibition of the African Slave-trade, and even as rapidly as possible to ameliorate the condition of the slaves, and prepare the way for their early emancipation, nothing is more certain than that the recognition of their independence will be promptly followed by the re-opening of that traffic by an amendment to the Constitution, or if that cannot be effected, by the processes of secession and nullification. Mr. Benjamin's instructions to the agents of the Confederacy abroad are designed to preclude any obstacle to this policy, in the shape of a stipulation with foreign powers; and the vote of fifty-seven members of the House of Representatives in 1860–1, against Mr. Etheridge's resolution, show plainly enough that the question was regarded by them purely as one of expediency. Even in the minority report of Mr. Pettigrew, described in my last article, the re-opening of the African Slave-trade is opposed exclusively on prudential and economical grounds.

If any doubt existed on this subject, it would be removed by the recent declarations of Mr. Slidell.* That gentleman and his associates in Europe have been very liberal of statements, which, if not intended by them to promise measures for the immediate amelioration, and ultimate abolition of Slavery, have, at least, been so understood by those to whom the statements were made. I received information to this effect a twelvemonth ago from a high official quarter in Europe. M. Emile de Girardin understood Mr. Slidell to say, that "the South was disposed to disencumber itself of Slavery, which was more injurious than advantageous;" and this remark was repeated in the correspondence of the *Courrier des Etats Unis* at New York. Mr. Slidell's attention having been called to the subject, he has authorized an explanation, for the purpose of showing why he could not have made the remark imputed to him. Neither of the three reasons assigned by him is the true one, viz. that the South entertains no such design; and it is plain, both in what he may have originally said to M. de Girardin, and in the gloss he now puts upon it, that he is one of those

> "Who palter with us in a double sense."

The second of his reasons, however, is sufficient to show that I have not gone too far in asserting that the intention of re-opening the Slave-trade, as soon as their independence is recognized, is already entertained by the leaders of the rebellion. It is in these words—"if Slavery is destined to disappear one day, or to be modified like all human institutions, this would not take place on the morrow of a revolution, *when the first necessity of the South will be to repair its losses.*" With an annual deficiency in the supply, according to the committee of the South Carolina legislature, of 30,000 or 40,000 slaves, and with the loss already incurred in the progress of the war, of at least a hundred thousand, where but from the African Slave-trade is the South to repair its losses?

Boston, 11th May, 1863.

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* National Intelligencer, 25th April, 1863.

THE HELPING HAND.

It is wonderful how slight a thing will save a drowning man's life. An oar thrown overboard will buoy him up, a thing scarcely thicker than a knitting needle will draw him safely to the shore. Franklin, when a boy, used to float on the surface of the water sustained by the pull of his flying kite, and men have ridden out storms on the great sea on hen-coops and insignificant splinters of mighty ships that had broken up under their feet.

It is the same in the troubled waters of Life's ocean. A very little help has often rescued a struggling brother who must otherwise have gone down to rise no more; and thousands *do* go down while those who might safely lend them a helping hand look on indifferently. The cry of "a man overboard!" at sea instantly rouses the sympathy of the ship's crew. Empty casks and light spars are thrown hastily over the bulwarks, a boat is lowered, or perhaps some daring messmate of the unfortunate sailor springs into the waves, rope in hand, and risks his life to save his comrade. But a man overboard in the business world causes no such commotion. Too often his struggles to keep his head above water are regarded with cool unconcern by his fellows, who seem more desirous to avoid contact with him than to lend him a helping hand. Who among us has not seen individuals, involved in difficulty by no fault of their own, sink hopelessly under the weight of their misfortunes when a little timely assistance would have kept them afloat and enabled them to reach terra firma. There is too little Christian charity in trade and commerce. "Do unto others as ye would they should do to you" is not the maxim of the mart, and the second clause of the commandment upon which hang "all the law and the prophets," is violated every hour of every day in the Realm of Bargain and Sale. Some solid men contemplate the ruin of the smaller fry with complacency. Their downfall tends to increase the influence of capital and to render its power more absolute in the market. Hence the Crœsuses of the mercantile world are apt to regard the shipwreck of ambitious aspirants with a self-satisfied smile, forgetting that there *are* financial hurricanes and tornadoes which sweep *all* before them; storms such as in times past have prostrated houses as strong as the Rothschilds, and against which the Colossi, between whose legs we pigmies walk, could offer no sufficient defence. The returning Hebrews congratulated themselves on the discomfiture of the Egyptians, when they—

> "Beheld
> From the safe shore their floating carcasses
> And broken chariot wheels;"

but their own worship of the "Golden Calf" in the wilderness entailed upon them disasters only second in magnitude to that which punished the greed and oppression of their enemies.

To lend a helping hand to any man who throws up his *own* hands, and manifests no disposition to save himself from sinking, is useless; but the "man overboard" on the voyage of life, who buffets the billows of fate valiantly, has a righteous claim to the sympathy and support of his more fortunate brethren. Save him, and salvage will be paid to every helping hand out of Heaven's Treasury.

REAL SOLDIERS VS. HOLIDAY SOLDIERS.

To see one of our veteran regiments, weather-stained and battle-scarred, marching along Broadway, is a revelation to such of us as have heretofore only been accustomed to holiday parades of our military. The palmy days of the Seventh regiment, whose drill and manœuvres used to be looked upon as the *ne plus ultra* of military accomplishments, have passed not to return again during the life of this generation. The difference between one of our returning two-year regiments and a regiment that has never seen service is marvellous—it is the difference between the *real thing* and the unreal. We have admirable militia regiments hereabouts, whose drill and evolutions are as good as an amateur regiment's can well be; but when the war boys come along, with their sweeping stride, and firm tread—as sweeping and as firm as when amid the flame and thunder and hurtling death of battle they swept upon their foes—the hearts of the beholders are strangely stirred, and a sensation of awe creeps over the applausive multitudes assembled to welcome the heroes home.

THE ROMAN EMPERORS.—No. 14.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

ELAGABALUS.

The ascent of Elagabalus, an effeminate Syrian, a high priest in the idolatrous worship of the Sun, to the sovereignty of the Roman world, took place early in the third century. His march from Syria to Italy was attended with pageantry and voluptuousness such as the empire had never witnessed before. He entered the streets of the imperial city in the double character of Pontiff and Emperor. The parade was one of the most gorgeous which even Rome had ever witnessed. The well swept pavements through which the imperial pontiff passed were sprinkled with gold dust. Elagabalus, arrayed in flowing robes of satin and gold, with a gorgeous tiara upon his brow, and with bracelets and collars studded with inestimable gems, led, rather than drove, six milk-white horses, sumptuously caparisoned, drawing a chariot containing the black conical stone, which was the emblem of the God at whose shrine he ministered. The Emperor, in the sacred character of high priest or supreme pontiff, held the reins and, supported by his attendants, walked slowly backward, that his eyes might not for a moment wander from the image of the divinity whom he adored.

A temple of imposing grandeur was reared on the Palatine mount, in honor of this new deity. Here he was daily worshipped with oblations and sacrifices surpassing all that Rome had yet beheld of idolatrous splendor. The most costly wines, the rarest animals and the most precious aromatics were profusely consumed on this altar. Syrian girls, of fairy grace and voluptuous beauty, danced around this altar, to lend to the worship all the attractions which sensual loveliness could minister. The highest functionaries of the court and of the army were compelled to lend their assistance to give an imposing air to these dissolute and demoralizing rites of idolatrous worship. Elagabalus, elated with prosperity and power, and in all the vigor of youth, surrendered himself, in unrestrained license, to the grossest sensual indulgence. His infamous religion taught him that the more recklessly and furiously he plunged into the vortex of sensuality, the more acceptably he adored his God. All the powers of art were summoned to stimulate his system; and his languishing appetites were reinvigorated by delicious wines and highly spiced viands.

This was the religion against which Christianity was slowly but surely forcing its way. The treasures of the empire were lavished by Elagabalus in these extravagant orgies. His palace was crowded with wives and concubines. The whole story of the career of this wretched idolater is too loathsome to be told. At one time he wore the dress and assumed the manners of a woman, and, to keep up the illusion, was publicly and pompously married to one of his courtiers. He even affected to have two lovers who were courting him, and scornfully he rejected one in accepting the other. Such was the state of public morals in the palace, and such was the character of the master of the world early in the third century. All these enormities were practiced in the open light of day, not only without concealment, but with the most ostentatious publicity. Contemporaneous history proves conclusively that this was the general character of the corrupt and opulent nobles of Rome.

But the most worthless have a voice within them which condemns the vice and worthlessness of others. The soldiers, brutal and dissolute as they were, turned with disgust from the monster who had been raised to the throne by their voice and arms. The palaces of the Cæsars, before the reign of Elagabalus, had been as corrupt as the ingenuity of their possessors could make them. But this oriental sovereign transplanted to Rome the vices of Asia, and thus introduced enormities of depravity which Europe had never before imagined. The ingenuity of the court of Elagabalus was taxed to subvert every law of nature and decency. Bad as some of the courts of Europe have been, in modern days, they can present no comparison with the utter demoralization of the court of this oriental despot. The world has made vast strides in the path of improvement since the advent of Christianity. No court in Europe would now tolerate for a single day the outrages perpetrated unblushingly by Nero and Elagabalus.

But at length even pagan Rome could endure such abominations no longer. The emperor had a cousin, Alexander—a very amiable, high-minded and noble young man. He had been trained by a pious mother, and under her Christian teaching had developed many of those traits of pure Christianity which Paul has so beautifully developed in the twelfth chapter of his epistle to the Romans. This character commanded the respect even of the Pretorian Guard. Elagabalus was exceedingly jealous of his cousin, and did everything in his power to entice him into his own paths of infamy. Failing in this, he attempted his life. But the watchfulness of the friends of Alexander saved him. He then endeavored to throw dishonor upon him, by degrading him from his true rank, and the posts of influence he had occupied. This exasperated the soldiery, and they rallied around Alexander with the most ardent enthusiasm.

The enraged emperor endeavored to punish some of them for a mutiny. This was his death warrant. The Pretorian Guard rose in its resistless wrath. In a mob sixteen thousand strong they burst into the city, rushed through the streets, surrounded the palace, broke into the royal apartment, seized the trembling Elagabalus, with their war clubs dashed out his brains, tied a rope to his heels, dragged him over the pavements with shoutings, and threw his mangled remains into the Tiber. At their command the obsequious senate passed a decree consigning the name of Elagabalus to eternal infamy, which decree posterity has fully ratified, and pronouncing the youthful Alexander emperor of Rome.

This young man was then but seventeen years of age. The soldiers whose omnipotence had made him emperor, supposed that they could mould him at their will. But the mother of this boy was a Roman lady who had become a convert to Christianity and was a true disciple of Jesus Christ. Her soul was shocked with the boundless infamy of vice which had reigned in the palace, and she consecrated all her maternal influence to inspire her son with the principles which animated her own life. She induced him to accept teachers of the most estimable character, who would inculcate the principles of the Christian faith and thus enkindle within him the love of all that is pure and of good report. All the foul minions of Elagabalus were dismissed from the court, and sixteen of the ablest senators were selected to act as privy council to the young sovereign. Order was thus speedily restored to the empire, and real merit became the only recommendation to office.

Under such guidance Alexander developed an unusually estimable character. His natural constitution seemed peculiarly adapted to accept all that is good and to repel all that is bad. There was apparently nothing in his nature to respond to any of the ordinary temptations of life. There are some such persons from whom, as Jeremy Taylor would express it, "temptation glides like raindrops from a duck's back." Elagabalus and Alexander were cousins. But they were apparently as different from each other as the dove differs from the vulture. It is not easy to explain the philosophy of this fact. There seemed to be in these two young men something back of education which was the foundation of their very different characters. The reader is familiar with many scenes of corruption in the palaces of the Cæsars. Contemplate for a moment the change which Christianity introduced to those palaces.

Alexander, who soon received the name of Severus, from the puritanic severity of his morals, rose at an early hour in the morning, and, at his first exercise, implored divine guidance for the day. He then, immediately after a frugal breakfast, assembled his council and devoted several hours to the affairs of the empire, earnestly seeking to redress all grievances and to promote in all respects the public welfare. He then devoted an allotted portion of time to study, reading with the greatest care the works of the most illustrious poets and historians of the day. From these studies he repaired to the gymnasium for the more full development of his physical system. He then took a bath and a frugal dinner, or rather lunch. After dinner he received petitions, and dictated letters and memorials to distant portions of the empire, till supper, which with the Romans was the principal meal of the day, corresponding with the five or six o'clock dinner of modern times. His table was always frugally spread, and temperance and sobriety reigned there. There were always invited guests at the supper table, and they were selected from the most distinguished, virtuous and intelligent people in Rome. The dress of Alexander was plain, and his manners highly polished. For forty years the palaces of the Cæsars had been a cess pool of pollution. The first approaches of Christianity thus changed the scene.

Alexander attempted the hazardous experiment of introducing some reforms in the army. It roused a cry of rage which resounded through the empire. In a paroxism of fury the Pretorian Guard marched into the city, breathing threatening and slaughter. But the emperor had his friends and troops loyal to him. For three days a terrible war raged through the streets of Rome. But the energy of Alexander repressed it, and with power consolidated by the difficulties over which he had triumphed, he entered upon a career of vigor and high accomplishment, which will be described in the next number.

FOLLOW MY LEADER.

This game is not confined to boys. It is the game of life. We see it in constant progress in the church, the army, the business world, in all occupations and pursuits. It is human nature. Mediocrity needs a guide; Weakness would be lost without one. "Boswell," said Dr. Johnson to his 'Man Friday,' "do you know what they say of you and me? They say that I am a big dog, and that you are a tin kettle tied to my tail." Two-thirds of the world's inhabitants are tin kettles tied to big dogs' tails. And how completely the interests of the kettles are at the mercy of the dogs. There's your Generalissimo now, with hundreds of thousands of such utensils clattering at his heels. How necessary that he should be a thorough bred bloodhound, keen of scent, active of limb, and too sagacious to be thrown out or put at fault by the dodges of the enemy. If he be a cur, wo to his tin kettles! Then the Lawyer; if, instead of a learned dog, he happens to be a mere ignorant puppy, what becomes of the tin ware, his clients. Much human hollow-ware is dragged at the heels of clerical yelpers and howlers, who mistake for the narrow track that leads to the celestial city a bye-path of their own. The true guides in that direction belong to two species only—the *Shepherd* and the *Retriever*. Above all, let those who aspire to be "chosen vessels," beware of the "dumb dogs" denounced in the Gospel. In business every bold dog is sure to have a large assortment of jangling trash flying after him, and whatever his fate may be, the appendices are pretty sure to be smashed on the road. All the big dogs of literature, and a good many naturally insignificant ones, who, by dint of puffing themselves up, contrive to occupy a larger space in the public eye than they deserve, have their tin kettles in abundance, that help them, as Boswell helped Johnson, to make a noise in the world, and are for the most part used as cavalierly as the great lexicographer used his rattling addendum. What was "Cæsar with the senate at his heels" but a great Italian mastiff, with all the utensils of the capitol "in a string."

A GOOD GENERAL MUST BE "FOND OF A BIT OF A ROW."

In his "History of the Invasion of the Crimea," Mr. Kinglake gives a minute and graphic account of the battle of the Alma, where the armies of civilized Europe met in the shock of war for the first time in forty years. It seems that neither England nor France nor Russia had a general who was capable of handling an army of 50,000 men in the field. The consequence was, that the battle was a series of the most ridiculous blunders; and the allies (France and England) finally won it, simply because the Russians blundered more egregiously than their foes. The philosophical author, who seems to understand both human nature and war, takes occasion to lay down some sound rules in regard to military chieftains, the chief of which is, that no commander can be successful in the field who is not himself fond of "a bit of a row;" in short, *who does not exult in battle for battle's sake*; and that the general who only fights on calculation, and a cold balancing of duty and probabilities, is certain to lose all the golden opportunities which a warlike commander would seize upon by virtue of his divine instincts for victorious strife. This is undoubtedly true. To be a conquering general, a man must be a good fighter, and a good hater of his foes. A peace-man, or one who looks upon the enemies of his country merely as "misguided brethren," can never wage successful war.

[From the World.]

Mr. Everett's Address.—We print, this morning, as liberal extracts as we can find space for from the address delivered by Mr. Everett before the Boston Union Club on Thursday evening. To call this address eloquent and patriotic is a needless tautology when we have said that it is Mr. Everett's. It is marked by a tone of courtesy toward the administration which, if not excessive, is at least generous and chivalrous; but this scrupulous observance of a refined and liberal courtesy is as characteristic of Mr. Everett as is his chaste and ornate eloquence. We trust this consideration for the administration, this generous forbearance and indulgence, will be reciprocated by its supporters. * * * The administration ought to recognize its debt of obligation to Mr. Everett and other avowed political opponents, for their efforts to strengthen its hands and aid in the discharge of its duties. Wherever apology for the administration is permissible or possible, Mr. Everett makes it in liberal measure; wherever it is impossible, he observes a more than generous silence. * * * Mr. Everett, it will be seen, believes peace at present impractible without dismembering the country, and that a peace which dismembered the Union would be disgraceful and ruinous.

OUR OWN SOLDIER-BOY.

BY MARY FORREST.

He loved his country: when she called, went forth—
His strong, young, manful life within his hand—
To save her honor, or to bravely die
Between her and the foe. Our bannered hosts
Are still advancing; still the land resounds
With muffled tramp, and shock of serried arms.
On each contested field the dead look up
By thousands—tens of thousands—look straight up,
Through trampled dust and blood-stained turf, to God,
Who holds the issue. Scarce one household hearth
But lacks some tender light from eyes so set
In death's mute, waiting wonder. We miss ours.
A chair stands empty in its wonted place,
A shadow falls across the floor, and he—
Our soldier-boy, his father's only son,
Taking his rest as truest soldiers do
When work is done—lies shot to death between
Us and the foe.
Oh, God! by lives like this—
By blood of husbands, fathers, brothers, sons,
So freely offered, hear us for our cause;
Unite our Northland in one loyal aim:
Wherever lifted, break the brazen front
Of treason. Make its very name a thing
So foul and hateful, men shall whisper it
With bated breath, and traitors *everywhere*
Be banned and branded. Then, and not till then,
The nation's flag shall float without a stain;
Then rebels and their serfs shall live alone
On record, telling how sublime a truth
We fought for, and how grand its triumph!

SELF-MADE;

OR,

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

BY MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE HIDDEN HAND," "THE LOST HEIRESS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ISHMAEL'S FIRST STEP ON THE LADDER.

There is a proud modesty in merit
Averse to asking, and resolved to pay
Ten times the gift it asks. DRYDEN.

Early the next morning the Professor made his appearance at the Hill Hut. Ishmael and Hannah had eaten breakfast, and the boy was helping his aunt to put the warp in the loom for a new piece of cloth.

"Morning, Miss Hannah; morning, young Ishmael! You are wanted, sir, up to the Hall this morning, and I am come to fetch you," said the Professor, as he stood within the door, hat in hand.

"Yes, I thought I would be; there must be no end of the rubbish to clear away, and the work to do up there now, and I knew you would be expecting me to help you, and so I meant to go up to your house just as soon as ever I had done helping Aunt to put the warp in her loom," answered Ishmael, simply.

"Oh, you think you are wanted only to be set to work, do you? All right! But now as we are in a hurry, I'll just lend a hand to this little job, and help it on a bit." And with that the artist, who was as expert at one thing as at another, began to aid Hannah with such good will that the job was soon done.

"And now, young Ishmael, get your hat and come along. We must be going."

But now, Hannah, who had been far too much interested in her loom to stop to talk until its arrangements were complete, found time to ask:

"What about that fire at Brudenell Hall?"

"Didn't young Ishmael tell you, ma'am?" inquired the Professor.

"Very little! I was asleep when he came in last night, and this morning, when I saw that his hair singed, his clothes were all scorched, and his hands and face red and blistered, and I asked him what in the world he had been doing to himself, he told me there had been a fire at the Hall; but that it was put out before any great damage had been done; nothing but that old wing, that they talked about pulling down, burnt, as if to save them the trouble," answered Hannah.

"Well, ma'am, that was a cheerful way of putting it, certainly; and it was also a true one; there wasn't much damage done, as the wing as was burnt was doomed to be pulled down this very spring. But did young Ishmael tell you how he received *his* injuries?"

"No; but I suppose of course he got them, boy-like, bobbing about among the firemen, where he had no business to be!"

"Ma'am, he got burnt in saving Commodore Burghe's sons, who were fast asleep in that burning wing! Mrs. Middleton offered freedom to any slave who would venture through the burning house to wake them up, and get them out. Not a man would run the risk! Then she offered freedom, not only to any slave, but also to the wife and children of any slave who would go in and save the boys. Not a man would venture! And when all the women were a howling like a pack of she-wolves, what does your nephew do but rush into the burning wing, rouse up the boys and convoy them out! Just in time, too! for they were sleeping in the chamber over the burning room, and in two minutes after they got out, the floor of that room fell in!" said Morris.

"You did that! You!" exclaimed Hannah, vehemently. "Oh! you horrid, wicked, ungrateful, heartless boy! to do such a thing as that, when you knew if you had been burnt to death it would have broken my heart! And *you*, Professor! *you* are just as bad as he is! yes, and worse too, because you are older and ought to have more sense! The boy was in your care! pretty care you took of him to let him rush right into the fire!"

"Ma'am, if you'll only let me get in a word *edgeways* like, I'll tell you all about it! I *did* try to hinder him! I reasoned with him, and I held him tight, until the young hero—*rascal*, I mean—turned upon me and hit me in the face; yes, ma'am, administered a 'scientific' right into my left eye, and then broke from me and rushed into the burning house——"

"Well, but I thought it better the Professor should have a black eye, than the boys should be burned to death," put in the lad, *edgeways*.

"Oh, Ishmael! Ishmael! this is all dreadful! You will live to be hung, I know you will!" sobbed Hannah.

"Well, aunty, maybe so. Sir William Wallace did," coolly replied the boy.

"What in the name of goodness set you on to do such a wild thing? And all for old Burghe's sons! Pray, what were they to you that you should rush through burning flames to save them?"

"Nothing, Aunt Hannah; only I felt quite sure that Israel Putnam or Francis Marion would have done just as I did, and so——"

"Plague take Francis Putnam and Israel Marion, and also Patrick Handcock, and the whole lot of 'em, I say! Who are they that you should run your head into the fire for them? They wouldn't do it for you, that I know'" exclaimed Hannah, in a fury.

"Aunt Hannah," said Ishmael, pathetically, "you have got their names all wrong, and you always do! Now, if you would only take my book and read it while you are resting in your chair, you would soon learn all their names, and——"

"I'll take the book and throw it into the fire the very first time I lay my hands upon it! The fetched book will be your ruin yet!" exclaimed Hannah in a rage.

"Now, Miss Worth," interposed the Professor, "if you destroy that boy's book, I'll never do another odd job for you as long as ever I live."

"Whisht! Professor," whispered Ishmael. "You don't know my Aunt Hannah as well as I do. Her bark is a deal worse than her bite! If you only knew how many times she has threatened to 'shake the life out of' me, and to 'be the death of' me, and to 'flay' me 'alive,' you would know the value of her words."

"Well, young Ishmael, you are the best judge of *that* matter at least. And now are you ready? For, indeed, we haven't any more time to spare. We ought to have been at the Hall before this."

"Why, Professor, I have been ready and waiting for the last ten minutes."

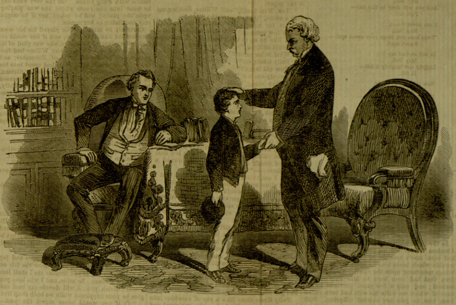
"Come along, then. And now, Miss Hannah, you take a well-wisher's advice and don't scold young Ishmael any more about last night's adventur'. He has done a brave act, and he has saved the commodore's sons without coming to any harm by it. And, if he hasn't made his everlasting fortun', he has done himself a great deal of credit and made some very powerful friends. And that I tell you! You wait and see!" said the Professor as he left the hut, followed by Ishmael.

The morning was clear and bright after the rain. As they emerged into the open air, Ishmael naturally raised his eyes and threw a glance across the valley to Brudenell Heights. The main building was standing intact, though darkened; and a smoke, small in volume but dense black in hue, was rising from the ruins of the burnt wing.

Ishmael had only time to observe this before they descended the narrow path that led through the wooded valley. They walked on in perfect silence until the Professor, noticing the unusual taciturnity of his companion, said:

"What is the matter with *you*, young Ishmael? You haven't opened your mouth since we left the hut."

"Oh, Professor, I am thinking of Aunt Hannah. It is awful to hear her rail about the great heroes as she does. It is flat blasphemy," replied the boy, solemnly.



ISHMAEL AND THE COMMODORE.

"Hum, ha, well, but you see, young Ishmael, though I wouldn't like to say one word to dampen your enthusiasm for great heroism, yet the truth is the *truth*; and that compels me to say that you *do* fall down and worship these same said heroes a little too superstitiously. Why, law, my boy, there wasn't one of them, at twelve years of age, had any more courage or goodness or wisdom than you have, even if as much."

"Oh, Professor, don't say that! don't! it is almost as bad as anything Aunt Hannah says of them. Don't go to compare their great boyhood with mine. History tells what they were, and I know myself what I am."

"I doubt if you do, young Ishmael."

"Yes! for I know that I haven't even so much as the courage that you think I have; for do you know, Professor, when I was in that burning house, I *was* frightened when I saw the red smoke rolling into the passage and heard the fire roaring so near me? And once—I am ashamed to own it, but I *will*, because I know George Washington always owned his faults when he was a boy—once, I say, I *was* tempted to run away and leave the boys to their fate."

"But you didn't do it, my lad. And you were not the less courageous because you *knew* the danger that you freely met. You are brave, Ishmael, and as good and wise as you are brave."

"Oh, Professor, I know you believe so, else you wouldn't say it; but I can not help thinking that if I really were good I shouldn't vex Aunt Hannah as often as I do."

"Humph," said the Professor.

"And then if I were wise, I would always know right from wrong."

"And don't you?"

"No, Professor; because last night when I ran into the burning house to save the boys I thought I was doing right; and when the ladies so kindly thanked me, I felt sure I had done right; but this morning, when Aunt Hannah scolded me, I doubted."

"My boy, listen to the oracles of experience. Do what your own conscience assures you to be right, and never mind what others think or say. I, who have been your guide up to this time, can be so no longer. I can scarcely follow you at a distance, much less lead you. A higher hand than Old Morris's shall take you on. But here we are now at the Hall," said the Professor, as he opened the gates to admit himself and his companion.

They passed up the circular drive leading to the front of the house, paused a few minutes to gaze upon the ruins of the burnt wing, of which nothing was now left but a shell of brick walls and a cellar of smoking cinders, and then they entered the house by the servants' door.

"Mr. Middleton and the Commodore are in the library, and you are to take the boy in there," said Grainger, who was superintending the clearing away of the ruins.

"Come along, young Ishmael!" said the Professor, and as he knew the way of the house quite as well as the oldest servant in it, he passed straight on to the door of the library and knocked.

"Come in," said the voice of Mr. Middleton.

And the Professor, followed by Ishmael, entered the library.

It was a handsome room, with the walls lined with book-cases; the windows draped with crimson curtains; the floor covered with a rich carpet; a cheerful fire burning in the grate; and a marble-top table in the centre of the room, at which was placed two crimson velvet arm-chairs occupied by two gentlemen—namely, Mr. Middleton and Commodore Burghe. The latter was a fine, tall, stout, jolly old sailor, with a very round waist, a very red face and a very white head, who, as soon as ever he saw Ishmael enter, got up and held out his broad hand, saying:

"This is the boy, is it? Come here, my brave little lad, and let us take a look at you!"

Ishmael took off his hat, advanced and stood before the Commodore.

"A delicate, little slip of a fellow to show such spirit!" said the old sailor, laying his hand on the flaxen hair of the boy and passing his eyes down from Ishmael's broad forehead and thin cheeks to his slender figure—"Never do for the army or navy, sir! be rejected by both upon account of physical incapacity, sir! eh?" he continued, appealing to Mr. Middleton.

"The boy is certainly very delicate at present; but that may be the fault of his manner of living; under better regimen he may outgrow his fragility," said Mr. Middleton.

"Yes, yes, so he may; but now as I look at him, I wonder where the deuce the little fellow got his pluck from! Where did you, my little man, eh?" inquired the old sailor, turning bluffly to Ishmael.

"Indeed I don't know, sir; unless it was from George Washington and——" Ishmael was going on to enumerate his model heroes, but the Commodore, who had not stopped to hear the reply, turned to Mr. Middleton again and said:

"One is accustomed to associate great courage with great size, weight, strength, and so forth!" and he drew up his own magnificent form with conscious pride.

"Indeed I do not know why we should then, when all nature and all history contradicts the notion! Nature shows us that the lion is braver than the elephant and history informs us that all the great generals of the world have been little men——"

"And experience teaches us that school-masters are pedants!" said the old man, half vexed, half laughing; "but that is not the question. The question is, how are we to reward this brave little fellow?"

"If you please, sir, I do not want any reward," said Ishmael, modestly.

"Oh, yes, yes, yes; I know all about that! Your friend, Mr. Middleton, has just been telling me some of your antecedents—how you fought my two young scapegraces in defence of his fruit baskets! wish you'd been strong enough to have given them a good thrashing! And about your finding the pocket-book, and forbearing to borrow a dollar from it, though sorely tempted by want! And then about your refusing any reward for being simply honest! You see I know all about you! So I am not going to offer you money for risking your life to save my boys! But I am going to give you a start in the world if I can. Come now, how shall I do it?"

Ishmael hesitated, looked down and blushed.

"Would you like to go to sea and be a sailor, eh?"

"No, sir, thank you."

"Like to go for a soldier, eh? You might be a drummer-boy, you know!"

"No, thank you, sir."

"Neither sailor nor soldier; that's queer too! I thought all lads longed to be one or the other! Why don't you, eh?"

"I would not like to leave my Aunt Hannah, sir; she has no one but me."

"What the deuce would you like then?" testily demanded the old sailor.

"If you please, sir, nothing; do not trouble yourself."

"But you saved the life of my boys, you proud little rascal! and do you suppose I am going to let that service pass unrepaid?"

"Sir, I am glad the young gentlemen are safe; that is enough for me."

"But I'll be shot if it is enough for *me!*"

"Commodore Burghe, sir, will you allow me to suggest something?" said the Professor, coming forward, hat in hand.

"And who the deuce are you?—Oh, I see! the artist-in-general to the country side! Well, what do you suggest?" laughed the old man.

"If I might be so bold, sir, it would be to send young Ishmael to school!"

"Send him to school! ha, ha, ha! ho, ho, ho! why, he'd like that least of anything else! why, he'd consider that the most ungrateful of all returns to make for his services! Boys are sent to school for *punishment*, not for *reward!*" laughed the Commodore.

"Young Ishmael wouldn't think it a punishment, sir," mildly suggested the Professor.

"I tell you he wouldn't *go* my friend! punishment or no punishment! Why I can scarcely make my own fellows go! Bosh! I know boys! school is their bugbear!"

"But, under correction, sir, permit me to say I don't think you know young Ishmael——"

"I know he is a boy! that is enough!"

"But, sir, he is rather an uncommon boy."

"In that case he has an uncommon aversion to school!"

"Sir, put it to him, whether he would like to go to school."

"What's the use, when I know he'd rather be hung?"

"But, pray, give him the choice, sir," respectfully persisted the Professor.

"What a solemn, impertinent jackanapes you are to be sure, Morris! But I *will* 'put it to him,' as you call it! Here, you young fire-eater! come here to me."

The boy who had modestly withdrawn into the back ground, now came forward.

"Stand up before me; hold up your head; look me in the face! Now, then, answer me truly and don't be afraid. Would you like to go to school, eh?"

Ishmael did not speak, but the moonlight radiance of his pale beaming face answered for him.

"Have you no tongue, eh?" bluffly demanded the old sailor.

"If you please, sir, I *should* like to go to school, more than anything in the world, if I was rich enough to pay for it," answered Ishmael.

"Humph! what do you think of that, Middleton? eh? what do you think of *that?* A boy saying that he would like to go to school! Did you ever hear of such a thing in your life? Is the young rascal humbugging us, do you think?" said the Commodore, turning to his friend.

"Not in the least, sir; he is perfectly sincere. I am sure of it, from what I have seen of him myself. And look at him, sir! he is a boy of talent; and if you wish to reward him, you could not do so in a more effectual way than by giving him some education," said Mr. Middleton.

"But what could a boy *of his humble lot* do with an education if he had it?" inquired the Commodore.

"Ah! that I cannot tell, as it would depend greatly upon future circumstances; but this we know, that the education he desires *cannot* do him any harm, and *may* do him good."

"Yes! well, then, to school he shall go. Where shall I send him?" inquired the old sailor.

"Here; I would willingly take him."

"*You!* you're joking! Why, you have one of the most select schools in the State."

"And this boy would soon be an honor to it! In a word, Commodore, I would offer to take him freely, myself, but that I know the independent spirit of the young fellow could not rest under such an obligation. *You*, however, are his debtor to a larger amount than you can ever repay. From you, therefore, even he can not refuse to accept an education."

"But your patrons, my dear sir, may object to the association for their sons," said the Commodore, in a low voice.

"Do *you* object?"

"Not I indeed! I like the little fellow too well."

"Very well, then, if any one else objects to their sons' keeping company with Ishmael Worth, they shall be at liberty to do so."

"Humph! but suppose they remove their sons from the school? what then, eh?" demanded the Commodore.

"They shall be free from any reproach from me. The liberty I claim for myself I also allow others. I interfere with no man's freedom of action, and suffer no man to interfere with mine," returned Middleton.

"Quite right! Then it is settled the boy attends the school. Where are you, you young fire-bravo! you young thunderbolt of war! Come forward, and let us have a word with you!" shouted the Commodore.

Ishmael, who had again retreated behind the shelter of the Professor's stout form, now came forward, cap in hand, and stood blushing before the old sailor.

"Well, you are to be 'cursed with a granted prayer,' you young Don Quixote. You are to come here to school, and I am to foot the bills. You are to come next Monday, which being the first of April and all-fools'-day, I consider an appropriate time for a beginning. You are to tilt with certain giants, called Grammar, Geography and History. And if you succeed with them, you are to combat certain dragons and griffins, named Virgil, Euclid, and so forth. And if you conquer them, you may eventually rise above your present humble sphere, and perhaps become a parish clerk or a constable—who knows? Make good use of your opportunities, my lad! Pursue the path of learning, and there is no knowing where it may carry you. 'Big streams from little fountains flow; Great oaks from little acorns grow;' and so forth. Good-bye! and God bless you, my lad," said the Commodore, rising to take his leave.

Ishmael bowed very low, and attempted to thank his friend, but tears arose to his eyes, and swelling emotion choked his voice; and before he could speak, the Commodore walked up to Mr. Middleton, and said:

"I hope your favor to this lad will not seriously affect your school; but we will talk farther of the matter on some future occasion. I have an engagement this morning. Good-bye! Oh, by the way—I had nearly forgotten: Mervin, and Turner, and the other old boys are coming down to my place for an oyster roast on Thursday night. I won't ask you *if* you will come. I say to you that you *must* do so; and I will not stop to hear any denial. Good bye!" and the Commodore shook Mr. Middleton's hand and departed.

Ishmael stood the very picture of perplexity, until Mr. Middleton addressed him.

"Come here, my brave little lad. You are to do as the Commodore has directed you, and present yourself here on Monday next. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir, I understand very well; but——"

"But—what my lad? Wouldn't you like to come?"

"Oh, yes, sir! more than anything in the world. I would like it, but——"

"What, my boy?"

"It would be taking something for nothing; and I do not like to do that, sir."

"You are mistaken, Ishmael! It would be taking what you have a right to take! It would be taking what you have earned a hundred fold. You risked your life to save Commodore Burghe's two sons, and you did save them."

"Sir, that was only my duty."

"Then it is equally the Commodore's duty to do all that he can for you. And it is also your duty to accept his offers."

"Do you look at in that light, sir?"

"Certainly I do!"

"And—do you think John Hancock and Patrick Henry would have looked at it in that light?"

Mr. Middleton laughed. No one could have helped laughing at the solemn, little, pale visage of Ishmael, as he gravely put this question.

"Why, assuredly, my boy! Every hero and martyr in sacred or profane history would view the matter as the Commodore and myself do."

"Oh, then, sir, I am so glad! and indeed, indeed, I *will* do my very best to profit by my opportunities, and to show my thankfulness to the Commodore and you," said Ishmael, fervently.

"Quite right! I am sure you will! And now, my boy, you may retire," said Mr. Middleton, kindly giving Ishmael his hand.

Our lad bowed deeply and turned towards the Professor, who, with a sweeping obeisance to all the literary shelves, left the room.

"Your everlastin' fortin's made, young Ishmael! You will learn the classematics, and all the fine arts; and it depends on yourself alone, whether you do not rise to be a sexton or a clerk!" said the Professor, as they went out into the lawn.

They went around to the smoking ruins of the burnt wing, where all the field negroes were collected under the superintendence of the overseer, Grainger, and engaged in clearing away the rubbish.

"I have a hundred and fifty things to do," said the Professor; "but, still, if my assistance is required here it must be given. Do you want my help, Mr. Grainger?"

"No, Morris, not until the rubbish is cleared away. Then, I think, we shall want you to put down a temporary covering to keep the cellar from filling with rain until the builder comes," was the reply.

"Come along, then, young Ishmael; I guess I will not linger here any longer; and as for going over to Mr. Martindale's, to begin to dig his well to-day, it is too late to think of such a thing. So I will just walk over home with you, to see how Hannah receives your good news," said the Professor, leading the way rapidly down the narrow path through the wooded valley.

When they reached the hut they found Hannah sitting in her chair before the fire, crying.

In a moment, Ishmael's thin arm was around her neck and his gentle voice in her ear, inquiring:

"What is the matter?"

"Starvation is the matter, my child! I cannot weave. It hurts my arms too much. What we are to do for bread I cannot tell! for of course the poor little dollar a week that you *earn is not going to support us!*" said Hannah, sobbing.

Ishmael looked distressed; the Professor dismayed! The same thought occurred to both—Hannah unable to work, Ishmael's "poor little dollar a week" would not support them; but yet neither could it be dispensed with, since it would be the only thing to keep them both from famine, and since this was the case, Ishmael would be obliged to continue to earn that small stipend, and to do so he must give up all hopes of going to school;—at least for the present, perhaps forever. It was a bitter disappointment, but when was the boy ever known to hesitate between right and wrong? He swallowed his rising tears and kissed his weeping relative, saying:

"Never mind, Aunt Hannah! Don't cry, maybe if I work hard I may be able to earn more."

"Yes; times is brisk; I dare say, young Ishmael will be able to bring you as much as two dollars a week for a while," chimed in the Professor.

Hannah dropped her coarse handkerchief and lifted her weeping face to ask:

"What did they want with you up at the Hall, my dear?"

"The Commodore wanted to send me to school, Aunt Hannah; but it don't matter," said Ishmael, firmly.

Hannah sighed.

And the Professor, knowing now that he should have no pleasure in seeing Hannah's delight in her nephew's advancement, since the school plan was nipped in the bud, took up his hat to depart.

"Well, young Ishmael, I shall start for Mr. Martindale's to-morrow to dig that well. I shall have a plenty for you to do, so you must be at my house as usual at six o'clock in the morning," he said.

"Professor, I think I will walk with you. I ought to tell Mr. Middleton at once. And I shall have no more time after to-day," replied the boy, rising.

They went out together and in silence retraced their steps to Brudenell Heights. Both were brooding over Ishmael's defeated hopes and over that strange fatality in the lot of the poor that makes them miss great fortunes for the lack of small means.

The Professor parted with his companion at his own cottage door. But Ishmael, with his hands in his pockets, walked slowly and thoughtfully on towards Brudenell Heights.

To have the cup of happiness dashed to the ground the very moment it was raised to his lips! It was a cruel disappointment. He could not resign himself to it. All his nature was in arms to resist it. His mind was laboring with the means to reconcile his duty and his desire. His intense longing to go to school, his burning thirst for knowledge; the eagerness of his hungry and restless intellect for food and action, can scarcely be appreciated by less gifted beings. While earnestly searching for the way by which he might supply Hannah with the means of living without sacrificing his hopes of school, he suddenly hit upon a plan. He quickened his footsteps to put it into instant execution. He arrived at Brudenell Hall and asked to see Mrs. Middleton. A servant took up his petition and soon returned to conduct him to that lady's presence. They went up two flights of stairs, when the man, turning to the left, opened a door and admitted the boy to the bed-chamber of Mrs. Middleton.

The lady, wrapped in a dressing gown and shawl, reclined in an arm-chair in the chimney-corner.

"Come here, my dear," she said, in a sweet voice. And when Ishmael had advanced and made his bow, she took his hand kindly and said: "You are the only visitor whom I would have received to-day, for I have taken a very bad cold from last night's exposure, my dear; but you I could not refuse. Now sit down in that chair opposite me, and tell me what I can do for you. I hear you are coming to school here; I am glad of it."

"I *was*, ma'am; but I do not know that I *am*," replied the boy.

"Why, how is that?"

"I hope you won't be displeased with me, ma'am——"

"Certainly not, my boy. What is it that you wish to say?"

"Well, ma'am, my Aunt Hannah cannot weave now, because her wrists are crippled with rheumatism; and, as she cannot earn any money in that way, I shall be obliged to give up school—unless——" Ishmael hesitated.

"Unless *what*, my boy?"

"Unless she can get some work that she can do. She can knit and sew very nicely, and I thought maybe, ma'am—— I hope you won't be offended——"

"Certainly not."

"I thought, then, maybe *you* might have some sewing or some knitting to put out."

"Why, Ishmael, I have been looking in vain for a seamstress for the last three or four weeks. And I thought I really should have to go to the trouble and expense of sending to Baltimore or Washington for one; for all our spring and summer sewing is yet to do. I am sure I could keep one woman in fine needle-work all the year round."

"Oh, ma'am, how glad I would be if Aunt Hannah would suit you."

"I can easily tell that. Does she make your clothes?"

"All of them, ma'am, and her own too."

"Come here, then, and let me look at her sewing."

Ishmael went to the lady, who took his arm and carefully examined the stitching of his jacket and shirt-sleeve.

"She sews beautifully. That will do, my boy. Ring that bell for me."

Ishmael obeyed and a servant answered the summons.

"Jane," she said, "hand me that roll of linen from the wardrobe."

The woman complied, and the mistress put the bundle in the hands of Ishmael, saying:

"Here, my boy; here are a dozen shirts already cut out, with the sewing cotton, buttons, and so forth, rolled up in them. Take them to your aunt. Ask her if she can do them, and tell her that I pay a dollar apiece."

"Oh! thank you, thank you, ma'am! I know Aunt Hannah will do them very nicely!" exclaimed the boy in delight, as he made his bow and his exit.

He ran home, leaping and jumping as he went.

He rushed into the hut, and threw the bundle on the table, exclaiming, gleefully:

"There, Aunt Hannah! I have done it!"

"Done what, you crazy fellow?" cried Hannah, looking up from the frying pan in which she was turning savory rashers of bacon for their second meal.

"I have got you—'an engagement,' as the Professor calls a big lot of work to do. I've got it for you, aunt; and I begin to think a body may get any reasonable thing in this world if they will only try hard enough for it!" exclaimed Ishmael.

Hannah sat down her frying pan and approached the table, saying:

"Will you try to be sensible now, Ishmael; and tell me where this bundle of linen came from?"

Ishmael grew sober in an instant, and made a very clear statement of his afternoon's errand, and its success ending as he had begun, by saying: "I do believe in my soul, Aunt Hannah, that anybody can get any reasonable thing in the world they want, if they only try hard enough for it! And now, dear Aunt Hannah, I would not be so selfish as to go to school and leave all the burden of getting a living upon your shoulders, if I did not know that it would be better even for *you* by and by! For if I go to school and get some little education, I shall be able to work at something better than odd jobbing. The Professor and Mr. Middleton, and even the Commodore himself, thinks that if I persevere, I may come to be county constable, or parish clerk, or schoolmaster, or something of that sort; and if I do, you know, Aunt Hannah, we can live in a house with three or four rooms, and I can keep you in splendor! So you won't think your boy selfish in wanting to go to school, will you, Aunt Hannah?"

"No, my darling, no. I love you dearly, my Ishmael. Only my temper *is* tried when you run your precious head into the fire, as you did last night."

"But, Aunt Hannah, Israel Putnam, or Francis——"

"Now, now, Ishmael—don't, dear, don't! If you did but know how I hate the very sound of those old dead and gone men's names, you wouldn't be foreverlasting dinging of them into my ears!" said Hannah, nervously.

"Well, Aunt Hannah—I'll try to remember not to name them to you again. But for all that I MUST FOLLOW WHERE THEY LEAD ME!" said this young aspirant and unconscious prophet. For I have elsewhere said, what I now with emphasis repeat, that "Aspirations *are* Prophecies," which it requires only Faith to fulfill.

Hannah made no reply. She was busy setting the table for the supper, which the aunt and nephew presently enjoyed with the appreciation only to be felt by those who seldom sit down to a satisfactory meal.

When it was over, and the table was cleared, Hannah, who never lost time, took the bundle of linen, unrolled it, sat down, and commenced sewing.

Ishmael, with his book of heroes, sat opposite to her.

The plain deal table, scrubbed white as cream, stood between them, lighted by one tallow candle.

"Aunt Hannah," said the boy, as he watched her arranging her work, "is that easier than weaving?"

"Very much easier, Ishmael."

"And is it as profitable to you?"

"About twice as profitable, my dear; so, if the lady really can keep me in work all the year round, there will be no need of your poor little wages, earned by your hard labor," answered Hannah.

"Oh, I didn't think it hard at all, you see, because Israel Put— I beg your pardon, Aunt Hannah—I won't forget again," said the boy, correcting himself in time, and returning to the silent reading of his book.

Sometime after he closed his book, and looked up.

"Aunt Hannah!"

"Well, Ishmeal?"

"You often talk to me of my dear mother in Heaven, but never of my father. Who was my father, Aunt Hannah?"

For all answer Hannah arose and boxed his ears.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

—What men want of reason for their opinions, they usually supply and make up in rage.

MAY BELL.

BY MRS. JOHN C. WINANS.

I am going from you,
May Bell,
Into the cold world to dwell—
To dwell.

Lovers will kneel to you,
May Bell,
Vowing none e'er loved so well—
So well.

Moonlight will come again,
May Bell,
And you will stray to this dell—
This dell.

I can never forget,
May Bell,
'Twas here you dropt your sweet spell—
Sweet spell.

In and around my life,
May Bell,
Lightly and brightly it fell—
It fell.

Now it hangs so heavy,
May Bell;
How heavy I may not tell—
Not tell.

You have broken my heart,
May Bell—
Left there a sorrowful knell—
Knell, knell.

I pray God to bless you,
May Bell,
And rising remorse to quell—
To quell.

I love and forgive you,
May Bell:
False one, forever, farewell—
Farewell.

JOHN WILBUR'S ELOPEMENT.

BY SLYVANUS COBB, JR.

In the great mansion of Elmwood Hill lived Absalom Wilbur and his son. Absalom Wilbur had seen much trouble in life—much of that trouble which bears heavily upon the heart, and brings mourning upon the spirit. Of eight children that had been born to him only one remained; and only a few years previous to the time of which we write his wife had been called from him, to join her sainted offspring. Still Mr. Wilbur mourned not as do those without hope. His faith in the eternal Fatherhood of God was strong and abiding; and, leaving those who had gone before into the spirit world to the care of the angels, he turned his attention to the improving of what remained.

Of worldly wealth Absalom Wilbur had an abundance. He had inherited much from his parents; and during the long years of his life, he had added to it—not with the hoarding spirit of the miser, but with the ceaseless energy of the thrifty worker, beneath whose touch things grow and multiply.

John Wilbur was three-and-twenty years of age; a tall, well-formed youth; with golden hair, and light grey eyes; and possessing a face of more than ordinary beauty. Yet that face had one great lack; it lacked health; it lacked the fire and vigor of well-directed manhood. He had graduated from college over a year before, and at present his only companions were books and papers. He pored over Greek and Hebrew; dove into the mists and mysteries of German Philosophy; studied and criticised the philosophers of Greece; and at the present time, he was engaged in reading the Zend-Avesta of Zoroaster in the original Sanscrit.

One forenoon, as John sat in his study, busily engaged over the mystic pages of the Hindoo scriptures, his father came in and took a seat. A shudder passed through the old man's frame as he saw the pale, care-worn look upon the face of his son, and he shook his head in sadness and doubt.

"Come, John," he said, "shut up your book, and listen to me a little while. I have something that I wish to say to you."

The student pushed his book from him, and looked up into his father's face.

"My dear boy, I am going to be serious and earnest with you; and I suppose you already imagine what I have come to say; but I must say it, and you must give me your attention."

The young man was impatient and uneasy, and his thin, white hands worked nervously in the folds of his dressing-gown.

"John," pursued the white-haired parent, "of all my kith and kin you are all that is left. What shall become of Elmwood when I am gone? Stop!—don't interrupt me. If you go on as you are going now, I shall outlive you. O, I wish you would listen to reason and common sense. You have life enough in you. Of all my children you were blessed with the stoutest frame, and with the fairest proportion of form. Come, come, my boy, I must see that chest filled out once more; those arms brought back to their force; and those cheeks flushed with the tints of health. Leave your books, and take my horses. When you tire of the horses, take the gun or the fishing-rod. And, furthermore, it is high time that you began to take some charge of the place. You must learn to direct the workmen, and superintend the estate."

"You have something more to say," remarked John, at the end of a long pause.

"Yes," continued the old man, energetically, "I have something more to say; and, my son, if you have any sense or reason left, you will give me respectful attention. You know that I want you to marry——"

"With Mary Howard," interrupted the youth, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"Yes—with Mary Howard. Her father was the nearest and dearest friend of my childhood, of my youth, and of my early manhood—the nearest and dearest outside of my own family. It was his dying wish that his daughter Mary might be your wife; and such has been and such still is, my wish. But, mind you, I would not wish this if I were not satisfied that she was all that a good man can need for a companion."

"My dear father," replied John, "I am sorry you have brought this thing up again. Let Mary Howard find a husband somewhere else. As for me, I do not want a wife at present. You know what my feelings are in this respect."

"But, my son, if you would see Mary—if you would cultivate her acquaintance—I know you would like her."

"I don't wish to see her. I saw her once, and she ran away from me."

"That was eight years ago, John. Mary has improved since then."

"I care not for her improvement. I want nothing to do with her. If I wanted a wife I might consent to see her; but I don't want one."

Absalom Wilbur labored longer with his son; but to no avail. The youth was bound to his enervating studies; his life-energies were dull and aimless; and he wanted no surging of the waters upon which he had launched the bark of his being.

One day the chamber-maid, who had been in Absalom Wilbur's employ since the death of his wife, took it into her head to get married, and a new servant was wanted at Elmwood. An advertisement was inserted in the paper, and several females applied for the place; but they did not suit. One morning, while the father and son sat at breakfast, a servant announced that a woman wished to speak with Mr. Wilbur.

Who was it?

It was the Widow Gould.

The old man said he would see her at once. She might come into the breakfast room. Years before she had been in his employ, and he knew her well.

And the widow came in—a middle-aged, mild-looking woman, in deep mourning. She lived in the town, and was known for a true and worthy person.

She had come to see about the advertisement in the paper.

"How, Mrs. Gould," said Wilbur, looking up with a smile, "do you want the place?"

"Not for myself, sir," replied the widow, with a low courtesy. "I have a niece that I would like to see in the place; and I am sure she would suit you."

"What is her name?"

"Polly Grace, sir."

"How old is she?"

"Twenty-one last December."

"Rather young," said Mr. Wilbur, shaking his head: but still, if you are willing to recommend her, you may bring her up. You know just what I want."

"I think," ventured the widow, modestly, "that you will find her all you can want. But, sir, I have one favor to ask for her. She has not suggested anything of the kind; but I know that the favor would be appreciated by her: In her early life she enjoyed privileges which she has been called upon to give up. She is a dear lover of music, and her father once owned a piano-forte——"

"O, I see," cried Wilbur; "you want that I should allow her to thump upon my piano."

"Yes, sir—if it would not be asking——"

"Pooh! If the girl can play, I shall enjoy it to hear her. So you may bring her up."

Towards noon the widow returned, and with her came Polly Grace.

A sweet, beautiful girl was Polly Grace. A form as faultless as the ideal of a sculptor; a face from which beamed health, happiness and love; features of rare purity and loveliness; soft, melting blue eyes; and hair of rich, golden brown, which hung in bewitching curls where it was not confined.

And Absalom Wilbur hired her to take the place of the chamber-maid who had gone away and got married.

Polly Grace came like a ray of sunshine into the great house. She had a pleasant word and a smile for everybody; she attended to her duties with promptness and cheerfulness; and then, when the labors of the day were done, she sat down to her books, or wandered away in the garden and orchards. At first she did not touch the piano; but Mr. Wilbur finally asked her to play for him; and, when he found that she knew how to handle the instrument, he had it thoroughly tuned and moved out into the day light.

Could Polly Grace play upon the piano?

One day, just as the shades of twilight were creeping softly over the scene, John Wilbur stopped in the hall, and listened to the music. Polly was playing and singing. He remembered when his sisters used to sing; and he remembered that he had heard his mother sing; but he had never before heard such music as that. The notes were as sweet and pure as the warbling of a robin, and there was a depth and soul in the melody, and in the spirit of the song, which fairly entranced the listener.

On the following day, [illegible] John Wilbur walked out into the garden, with his book under his arm, intending to read awhile in one of the arbors. He was approaching an arbor near the end of the main walk, when he came upon Polly Grace; but she did not see him. Her back was towards him, and as he had been walking upon the grass his step had not aroused her. What was she doing? John was curious to know. So he approached a little nearer, and looked over her shoulder. She had a sheet of paper spread out before her, upon which she was sketching the scene before her. Her pencil was handled with ease and skill, and with a rapidity and freedom of touch that told that she was mistress of the art. She was at that moment dashing in the foliage of one of the great elm trees, and so absorbed did the young man become in watching the movements of those small white fingers, and in noting the marvellous effects produced by the rapid touches of the pencil, that he entirely forgot himself. He moved thoughtlessly, and Polly Grace started up.

"O, fie, fie, sir!" she cried, quickly turning her sketch face downward.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Grace. I certainly meant no offence."

"It is no offence, sir. Pardon me if I spoke hastily." She would have moved away with these words, but John detained her.

"Miss Grace, will you not allow me to see the sketch you have been making?"

"Certainly, sir, if you wish it," she replied. There was no hesitation in her manner; no mock coyness. She seemed to regard John Wilbur as an honorable man, and if it would please him to examine the result of her labors, she had no objections.

"The sketch is not finished, sir, as you will perceive," she continued, as she handed it to him; "but I think I have done enough to show that the subject is worthy of a better pencil than mine. There are many grand studies about this place."

John Wilbur knew something of art, and when he took that sketch into his hand he knew that it was a work of more than ordinary merit. Who was this young girl that sang and played so sweetly, and who handled the pencil with the skill of a master? He said something about sketches in general, and she answered him. He spoke of the German School, and of the Italian School; and she, with a smile, followed him with perfect freedom of understanding. Still keeping possession of the sketch, he sat down upon the bench; and presently he asked her if she would not sit down beside him.

John Wilbur spoke of music and of poetry. He asked her if she had ever read Schiller. She nodded in the affirmative.

"Ah, Miss Grace, you cannot know the real beauties of Schiller by our translations."

Polly Grace smiled, and nodded, and finally acknowledged that she had read Schiller in the original. She had read a few of his compositions; but not many. She admitted his genius and the elegance of his language; but she doubted his morality. She liked Goethe better.

John Wilbur was astonished anew. He quoted from the "*Sorrows of Werther*," and from "*Faust*;" and Polly followed him, quoting in her turn such passages as pleased her best. And then she recited some rare selections in the original, to show how utterly impossible it was to render it into English without leaving behind much of the poet's fancy.

Perhaps the young lady understood French? O, yes. She spoke French as fluently as she spoke her own tongue.

"But," said John, in amazement, "I don't understand how you have accomplished all this."

"Why, sir," she replied, looking up with an arch expression, "do you imagine that women have no faculty for improvement? Are you of those——"

"Pardon me," interrupted John. "I did not mean that. I meant——"

"Ah—I see," said Polly, as he hesitated. "You wonder that one in my position should have arrived at such a stage of education. But, sir," she added, in a lower tone, "you must remember that I was not always an orphan, as I am now. Once I had a bright, happy home. I had a father who loved me, and whose chiefest joy was in ministering to my wants. Excuse me, sir."

There was a moisture in her deep blue eyes; and her hand trembled as she held it out after her sketch. John detained her no longer.

That was not the last time that John Wilbur talked with Polly Grace. On the very next day he went into the room where she was playing upon the piano; and he asked her if he might stay and listen to her music.

Certainly he might. She played for her own amusement and recreation, and if she could afford entertainment to others, she was glad of it.

At the end of a month John Wilbur had forgotten the ponderous tome of Zoroaster, and the spirit of music and poetry had crept into his soul. And—another spirit was not far distant. In fact, that other spirit had already possessed him. He was in love. He loved the fair Polly, and he told her so. He made a free and frank confession, and offered her his hand and his heart.

Polly was not a hypocrite. She loved him in return—loved him truly and fondly; and she pillowed her head upon his bosom, and wept tears of joy when she told him so.

Would she be his wife?

Yes—with his father's consent.

John sought his father, and put the question. Absalom Wilbur started with astonishment.

"What—marry with my chamber-maid!"

"But she is worthy," said John, "and I love her."

"Never!" cried the old man, stamping his foot.

"Is this your answer?"

"It is. Let me hear no more of it!"

John Wilbur drew himself up to his full height, and turned proudly, defiantly away. His spirit was aroused and his purpose was fixed. He sought Polly, and told her that she must be his wife. At first she refused; but this only added to his determination.

"I will not cast from me the hopes and joys of a lifetime!" he said, as he drew the fair one to his bosom. "If you forsake me I shall leave this spot forever. Be mine, and I will love you; I will cherish you; I will devote my best energies to your happiness while we both shall live."

"O, if you would never regret the past—if you would never blame me for listening to your persuasion——"

"Never, never, love!"

And finally she consented that she would be his wife.

John Wilbur went away and got the marriage certificate; and, on one bright, moonlight evening, he led Polly Grace away from his father's house—led her down to the foot of the park, where a carriage was in waiting; and when he had handed her in, and taken a seat by her side, he took the reins and applied the whip to the horse.

John Wilbur was eloping! He knew it—he realized it; and yet he did not feel unhappy. The blood was coursing through his veins as it had not coursed before for years; and he felt that, for the fair being who now clung to him for support, he could brave all the dangers the world ever saw.

At the distance of ten miles from Elmwood he reached the dwelling of the clergyman whom [illegible] accommodating man, who did more marrying than all the rest of the clergymen of that section put together. His name was Marton.

John Wilbur soon made his business known, and requested that the knot might be tied with as little delay as possible.

Mr. Marton led them into his little parlor, where lights were burning, and where a register was produced.

"If you will sign your names to these declarations," the clergyman said, "we will very soon fix you snug and fast for life."

"Of course," responded John. He saw that it was a simple affair—a declaration that the persons signing were of lawful age; and that they knew of no just cause why they should not be married. He wrote his name with a hand somewhat hurried, but yet firm and decided; and then handed the pen to his companion.

"Don't tremble," he whispered, as he saw how agitated she was.

"If I am to write my name," she said, "I must not write it *Polly*,—that is only a nick-name. My parents christened me MARY."

"Then write it, MARY," returned John. "I like that name much better than the other."

Still the maiden hesitated, and the pen trembled in her fingers.

"Why don't you write it down, love? Shall I hold your hand? Come—courage."

"But, John—there is more than that."

"More than what?"

"More than Mary."

"Of course—*Mary Grace*."

"But there is more than that."

"How?"

"I have a third name."

"A—third—name?"

"Yes."

"In mercy's name, what do you mean?"

"O, John—do not blame me! Do not reproach me! Do not withdraw your love now that I have learned to live in its warmth and light! My name is MARY GRACE HOWARD!"

"Down with it!" cried a voice from a far corner of the room. "Down with it—MARY, and GRACE, and HOWARD! and if the young rascal backs out, I'll marry you myself, and kick him out of doors!"

It was Absalom Wilbur who spoke.

"Oho!" he continued, as he approached his astounded son. "Did you think I didn't know what was up? Did you think you'd have a wedding, and I not be in at the marrying? Why, bless your soul, my boy, I've read you through and through. But come, I don't want to hinder matters. Put down your name, Mary."

The poor girl dropped the pen, and rested her head upon John's bosom.

"O," she cried, trembling at every joint, "forgive me! forgive me!"

John Wilbur wound his arms about her, and kissed her, and then told her to sign the register. She did as she had been told, and afterward Absalom Wilbur took her by the hand.

"Now, my boy," he said, "shall I give her to you?"

The youth did not hesitate. With eager, hopeful look, he said:

"Yes!"

"Take her, John; and, as God shall judge between me and thee, I believe I give unto thee a jewel beyond all price; and that, in the consummation of this plot which I have wrought against your prejudice, I have secured unto thee a blessing which shall make purer, and happier, and better the rest of your life!"

And they were married; and they went home; and John Wilbur never regretted that he had been caught in his father's trap. As the years passed on he grew stout and robust, and felt thankful for life. He continued to read German and French, because his wife could bear him company in those literary walks; but his Greek and Hebrew were sadly neglected; and as for Sanscrit, he forgot it entirely.

WARP AND WEFT;

OR,

THE COTTON FAMINE.

A TALE OF MANCHESTER LIFE.

BY J. F. SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "THE SOLDIER OF FORTUNE," "DICK TARLETON," "THE STEP MOTHER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLIII.

He knew not those hearts whose nerves
Like tempered steel bend with the blast;
Hearts which oppression only serves
To strengthen when the storm is past.
AUTHOR'S SCRAP BOOK.

Conscience has been defined as the inward monitor of man; but the definition, in our judgment, is incomplete: it is something more than a monitor—a tender, affectionate friend, watching our actions and thoughts with a solicitude that ends but with life. It hopes against hope, raising its warning voice to ears long deaf to everything but the suggestions of interest, passion, and ambition, and is silenced only by death, when conscience becomes judgment, from whose sentence there is no appeal, its decisions being irrevocable, made with full cognizance of cause.

Although a long career of heartlessness and cruelty had blunted all the finer sensibilities of his nature, John Bentley felt something very like a blush mantling his cheek on meeting his long-enduring, uncomplaining wife, whose dream of happiness he had so ruthlessly destroyed. The self-possession, amounting to firmness, with which she received him added to his confusion; tears and reproaches would not have affected him half so much.

As for Miss Westbury, there was no possibility of mistaking her feelings towards the faithless husband of her adopted child. The high-spirited woman did not descend to the hypocrisy of pretending not to perceive the hand he held out to her, but turned disdainfully away.

Lady Augusta, who had just alighted from the carriage, felt highly amused at the scene.

"How very affectionate!" she whispered to her husband.

Gilbert shrugged his shoulders, but made no reply. Kissing his mother formally upon the cheek, he introduced his wife to her and to Miss Westbury, who welcomed her with that studied politeness in which it is evident the heart has no share.

The haughty woman felt offended, although she well knew that she merited their coldness, never having written to her mother-in-law but once since her marriage.

Pleading fatigue, she requested that the housekeeper might be called to show her to her room.

"I am my own housekeeper," observed Mrs. Bentley, with quiet dignity, "and will conduct you myself."

John Bentley bit his lips, and, to mark his resentment, received his son Frederick with more than usual indifference. He knew that it would wring the heart of his mother.

The meeting between the brothers proved equally cool. The warm expressions of affection which rose to the lips of Frederick were frozen by the distant tone and bearing of Gilbert, as he extended a gloved hand to him.

It was a strange re-union—indifference on one side, the sense of unmerited neglect and unkindness on the other. At dinner each person appeared uncomfortable, for each one was dissatisfied.

"This will never do, Mary," said Mr. Bentley, addressing his wife. "Lady Augusta will expire of ennui. You must invite your friends to meet her."

"I have no friends now," was the calm reply.

A second time her husband bit his lips. For an instant he felt puzzled. "Does she think to brave me?" he thought. A smile of conscious power answered the suggestion, as he recollected how utterly dependent circumstances had made her.

Before leaving London, John Bentley made up his mind not to keep the promise so repeatedly made to his second son. For several months past he had been in treaty for the purchase of a large estate in a distant part of the country, and a partnership would interfere with the arrangement; added to which, it was his wish to retain an absolute power over Frederick in his own hands. Like most selfish natures, he loved to act the despot.

"We must wait till more prosperous times," he observed, when the young man reminded him of his pledge. "These are not the times to make a change."

"And your word, sir?"

"It shall be kept some day," was the reply; "but not just now. Your brother thinks of changing his regiment; besides, I am not quite decided whether I shall part with the mill or not."

The excuse was as mean as it was insulting.

"It is time, then, that I did something for myself."

"As you please, my boy. I have not the slightest objection."

"Father!" exclaimed Frederick, greatly agitated, "what have I done to merit this estrangement? Why such marked distinction between my brother and myself? Have I ever proved wanting in obedience, or attention to your interests?"

"You forget Gilbert is the eldest."

"Should that make me an outcast from your heart?"

"Outcast is a strong word," observed Mr. Bentley, drily.

"You have forced it from me," replied the young man, bitterly. "Heaven knows how long I struggled against the sad conviction that I had no place in your affection—how deeply it has pained me. Mine is not a position fitting for a son. I am little better than a servant in the establishment."

"You have heard my determination," said his father, drily. "I rarely recede from a resolution I have once taken, and most certainly shall not do so in the present instance. Of what is it you complain? Your position? Pride, boy, pride. The salary you receive ought to satisfy you—it is amply sufficient. But sufficient or not," he added, "this is not the time to augment it."

Mrs. Bentley entered the library. She saw, by the flushed countenance of Frederick, and the cool but angry expression of her husband's features, that the explanation between them had proved unsatisfactory.

"Leave me with your father," she whispered.

"Useless, dear mother, quite useless—his heart is closed against me."

The request was repeated, and her son quitted the room, depressed, pained, and humiliated.

"It is no use, Mary," observed the hypocrite; "my mind is made up. He has been wanting in respect to me."

"More than you have been wanting in affection for him?" replied his wife, calmly.

John Bentley regarded her with an air of half-amused surprise.

"Have I not been a patient, obedient wife?" continued the unhappy woman, with difficulty repressing her tears. "Has one word of reproach ever escaped my lips? I have borne uncomplainingly neglect and wrongs that wound the heart most deeply, yet never murmured. By all that I have endured, by my blighted youth, the rudely waking from my dream of happiness, I conjure you—act justly by our son."

"Say your favorite son," replied her husband. "You would not have pleaded thus earnestly for his brother."

"Time was that your reproach, John, would have reached me; but it falls harmless now—the arrow is barbed by injustice. Has Gilbert ever been a son to me? treated me with the respect due to a parent?"

"He saw your preference, no doubt, for Frederick."

"Impossible. For years I concealed it from myself."

"And resented it."

"This, probably, is the last time we shall ever speak upon the subject. For myself, I would scorn to ask either justice or compassion at your hands."

"Indeed!"

"But I am a mother, and a mother's heart is stronger than pride or resentment. Grant, I entreat you, the only boon I shall ever ask, and the past, John—the long, dreary past, my wrongs as a wife—shall be forgiven."

"No."

"You refuse to make Frederick partner, as you promised?"

"Most positively."

"Reflect."

"Pshaw! madam, do you think to intimidate me?"

"No. I would entreat you—entreat you humbly, John—as a wife ought," said Mrs. Bentley, bursting into tears. "You inherited all my poor father's wealth; be just to his grandchild."

"I am just, madam," replied the hypocrite, who began to tire of the scene. "If my decision appears harsh to you, you have only to thank your unnatural partiality for your youngest son. Years since it decided me to protect the interests of his brother.

"No fooling," he continued, as his wife was about to cast herself at his feet. "If you knew how I detest a scene of this kind, you would not attempt it with me."

Mrs. Bentley dried her tears, and walked quietly out of the room.

"What a soft yielding fool she must take me for!" thought her husband; "to imagine that words could move me, after so many years' experience, too. To do her justice, it is her first act of folly, and I trust it may prove the last."

He was mistaken. His wife had committed a still greater one when she listened to his vows, and consented to bestow her hand upon him. Perhaps—and it is a difficult thing to read the human heart, especially a woman's—she loved him still: not himself, not the real John Bentley, but the ideal—one her imagination had created.

"Mother! mother!" exclaimed Frederick, embracing her tenderly when she returned to the drawing-room. "You have humbled yourself in vain to him."

"The monster!" ejaculated Miss Westbury. "If your dear father could only see——"

"Hush!" interrupted her niece. "Not a word. I require all my strength of mind to bear up against this blow.

"Do not follow me. I am going to my chamber. I require to be alone—alone, to pray for consolation and strength. You will not leave me?" she added, turning suddenly to her son.

"Leave you!" repeated the young man.—"Nothing the world can offer would tempt me to abandon you in your sorrow. No matter how humble my position, where you are I remain, even though I have to toil for my daily bread. protect you."

Mrs. Bentley regarded him for an instant with a look in which pride and gratified affection appeared struggling for mastery, and quitted the room.

"Poor Mary!" sighed Miss Westbury. "The last blow, I fear, will prove too heavy for her."

"I must endeavor to lighten it," observed Frederick, "by concealing my disappointment. I will endure anything to bring peace to her mind."

"Good boy! noble boy!" said the spinster. "I wish I had not been such a fool."

"You, aunt! What mean you?"

"Oh, nothing! nothing particular!" answered the lady, hastily. "We have most of us something to regret."

She alluded to the settlement of her fortune—a sacrifice Frederick Bentley had not the slightest suspicion of.

Lady Augusta, who already began to regret her condescension in visiting her husband's Manchester connections, as she disdainfully termed the family she had been *bought* into, felt greatly annoyed at dinner because neither her mother-in-law nor Miss Westbury made her appearance. She hinted more than once that it was a want of proper respect.

John Bentley knit his brows. He began to tire of the airs her ladyship gave herself, and long since would have spoken his mind upon the subject, but for the blind affection he bore to Gilbert.

"My mother is indisposed," observed Frederick, gravely.

"And her aunt also, I presume?" replied the lady, sarcastically.

Her husband gave her a warning look to be silent, but it was unheeded.

"I do not understand such sudden indisposition," she continued. "In the circle in which I am accustomed to move——"

"Allow me to correct your ladyship," interrupted her father-in-law. "*In the circle in which my money enables you to move.* That is, doubtless, what you intended to say. Pray proceed," he added, bowing with ironical politeness.

Like many other domestic tyrants, John Bentley did not choose that any one should act the despot in his family but himself.

"Father! dear father!" ejaculated Gilbert, who, knowing the violent temper of his wife, feared a scene; "you misunderstood Augusta."

"I think not," was the reply.

"Gilbert," said her ladyship, with freezing dignity, "I did not come to this wretched place to be insulted."

"My love!"

"You can remain or not, as you please; I return to town in the morning."

Having announced her resolution, the haughty beauty rose from the table and quitted the room.

"A pleasant visit," muttered John Bentley.

"Very pleasant," repeated his eldest son.

"And all through you," added his father, addressing Frederick. "It is you, sir, who have incited your mother and Miss Westbury to treat *me* with disrespect. You will not carry your point by such conduct, I promise you. Not a word! To-morrow shall see a change in their conduct. It is time, I find, to speak and act as master in my own family."

The next day did see a change—though not exactly the one the speaker anticipated.

Anxious to avoid irritating his unnatural parent further, Frederick Bentley left the house the instant the dinner was finished, and hastened to the pretty cottage-home, where Ellen impatiently expected him.

The affectionate girl had no occasion to ask the result of the meeting with his father: she read it in his looks.

"My father has broken his promise to me," said the young man.

The hand of Ellen sank upon his shoulder, and she wept bitterly.

"Do you still trust me?"

"Yes," was gently murmured in his ear.

"I will answer such confiding love as true love should be answered," replied Frederick, with a smile. "In the morning you shall accompany me to Manchester."

The confiding girl sprang into his arms with a cry of joy, and thanked him for the promise with a kiss of pure affection—a bribe that might have well repaid a greater boon—if an act of simple justice may be termed one.

"To-morrow!" repeated Ellen, joyously; "to-morrow!"

During the rest of the morning she could think of nothing else; and when the hour of repose arrived, sank to rest, repeating the word.

She murmured it even in her sleep.

With great difficulty Mrs. Hannan extorted from her husband a promise not to renew the sad spectacle he had offered to the public gaze by playing with old John in front of the Dispensary. Her affection as a wife—her woman's pride, revolted at the thought of the humiliation of the husband who was so dear to her. And yet something must be done; the pale spectre, Famine, not only stared them in the face, but had taken up its abode in her once happy home—glared upon her in the sunken eyes of her son, the haggard looks of the aged widow, who bore the pangs of hunger uncomplainingly.

"It bean't for myself," she repeatedly observed. "It don't matter how I go. I've lived my time; but it be hard to see Willie, my darlin' Willie, and the boy, clemming to death. I do hope the Awmeety will take me first. I be no good, now—only a burden to you."

By appealing to the friends of her earlier youth, Mrs. Hannan contrived to obtain some slight assistance; but the chief support of the family arose from the sale of the furniture, every article of which was slowly disappearing. In fact, the beds they slept upon, the chairs, and the kitchen-table, were pretty well the only articles remaining.

But the greatest sorrow of all to the blind man was the loss of his child—the disgrace of his darling Ellen.

The kitchen was still scrupulously clean, although stripped of nearly all the furniture; and want—haggard want—appeared in the pallid features of the inmates. Even the resignation of Willie had given way, and he sat with his head half bowed upon his breast, facing the open door; whilst his wife and mother were plying their knitting-needles beside the empty grate.

Martin had taken refuge in the little parlor with a book, in the vain hope of deadening the pangs of hunger by reading. Like his parents, he, too, was sadly changed. The once bright, resolute eyes were dimmed; and his free, manly footsteps had lost their elasticity.

Everything appeared so sad, and monotonous, and dreary in the once cheerful home—so oppressively silent, that the fall of a feather might have been heard, or the buzzing of an insect.

Suddenly a shadow darkened the opened door. Mrs. Hannan looked up, and recognized, to her terror, her daughter Ellen, pale, trembling, and scarcely able to sustain herself.

Fearing the effect upon the broken health of her husband, should he become aware of her presence, she motioned her away.

"Mother!" sobbed the unhappy girl.

"Who spoke?" demanded the blind man, starting from his seat.

The sign was repeated, almost imploringly.

"Who spoke, I say?"

The sight of so much misery in her once happy home—the sound of the voice she had so long been a stranger to, produced such an effect upon the heart of Ellen, that she felt her strength giving way beneath the shock. Fearing to fall upon the threshold, she made one desperate effort, and threw herself at her father's feet, clasped his knees, and bathed them with her tears, sobbing, at broken intervals—

"Pardon!—pardon!"

"Silence!" whispered Mrs. Hannan to her mother-in-law, who was about to speak. "Next to God, the father is the judge of the child."

There was something so impressive in the look which accompanied her words, that the garrulous, passionate old woman felt awed, and obeyed.

Several minutes elapsed before poor Willie found strength to utter a word. He made no attempt to disengage himself from the embrace of his repentant child, but stood, silent and statue-like, absorbed in mental prayer, the tears streaming from his sightless orbs.

"Pardon! pardon!"

"Pardon!" repeated her father, speaking very slowly. "Do you ask it in the spirit of true repentance—such repentance as cleanseth the heart by suffering—or has your wrong-doer abandoned you, and you come merely to find a shelter for your sin and sorrow?

"Well, well," he added, after a pause, "the shelter shall not be denied you. It is all that poverty has left me to bestow."

"In penitence—true, sincere penitence—for having quitted my home without your permission. Oh! I have never known one happy moment since. My pillow has been bathed with nightly tears—my days wretched and sorrowful. Say that you forgive me—that you will let me see you sometimes—alleviate your wants, and——"

"Begone!" interrupted the blind man, sternly. "Had you come with a broken spirit, my heart would have received you, although you have well nigh broken it. I was stricken in the full strength of manhood, full of energy—a life made blank, but never felt the bitterness of shame till this sad hour. I bless the darkness which prevents me gazing on the features of the child who dares prefer dishonor to her father."

"Not dishonor," murmured Ellen, faintly. "Pity—pity me!"

"If you would win my forgiveness, abandon the villain who led you from the path of duty and virtue. Promise never to see him more."

"My heart would break."

"Away, then!" said the blind man, indignantly. "Approach not the home you have dishonored again, lest my curse—a father's curse——"

His words were interrupted by a piercing shriek. His daughter must have fallen senseless upon the floor, had not Fred Bentley, who had been listening at the door, darted into the kitchen and caught her in his arms.

"Ellen—my life—my love!" he exclaimed, pressing her eagerly to his bosom—"look up—look up—the mystery is at an end. Welcome poverty a thousand times, rather than this misery."

"He—he here? the villain beneath my roof?" cried Willie, fearfully excited. "Wife, Martin, place me within his reach. Oh! I am blind and helpless!"

On hearing his name, Martin rushed from the parlor, his eyes flashing with passion, shame, and resentment. Another instant, and the gallant boy would have sprung at the throat of the intruder; but his sister perceived his design, and threw herself into his arms.

"Let me go!" said her brother.

"Patience! a moment—one moment, if you ever loved me!" replied Ellen, frantically.

"William Hannan," said Frederick, "hear me for a few instants."

"Away!"

"If I depart," replied the young man, calmly, "my wife goes with me."

The word "wife," which struck upon the ears of all, appeared to paralyse his hearers. Not one of them could speak. Hope, doubt, fear, and incredulity appeared upon the features of all.

"Release your brother, Ellen," continued the speaker. "He will listen to me now. William Hannan, the only sin your child has committed has been the sin of disobedience. The fault is a grave one, I confess; yet it is one a father's heart ought easily to pardon. She is my wife. As fast as human and heavenly laws can make us so, we are one. I should have hated, despised, execrated myself had a thought of wrong to purity like hers found an entrance to my heart."

"Ellen! my child! light to my darkness! life's sweetest music! Come to me—come to your poor fond father's heart!" exclaimed Willie. "Let me kiss away your tears, feel your head nestling once more as when an infant upon my breast. Bless you, my poor girl! bless you! Wife," he continued, eagerly, "our child! our first-born! whom we may still proudly own. Martin, my boy, too! I cannot see you. Let me feel you near me. The night of misery has passed away, and our cup of happiness is filled once more to overflowing."

In the transport of his joy, the blind man enfolded in the same embrace the faithful partner of his sorrows and his children.

"You have another son, sir," observed Frederick Bentley, deeply moved. "Have you no blessing for him?"

"Young man," said his father-in-law, "in restoring my child to me, pure and unstained, you have removed so great a sorrow from my heart that all other errors are forgiven. I fear you have taken a rash step," he continued, "in wedding a portionless bride."

"Wealth is not the measure of happiness," replied the husband of Ellen. "All I regret now is the unhappiness the concealment of our marriage cost you. For the rest, it has been useless."

"I understand. Your father——"

"Has refused to keep the promise he made of taking me as a partner."

"Poor children!" sighed Willie. "Poor children! Would I were rich!"

"And is this marriage still to be kept a secret?" asked Mrs. Hannan, timidly.

"No," replied Frederick Bentley, firmly. "Not all my father's wealth told down a hundred times could compensate the pain of witnessing another blush upon the cheek of Ellen. If you knew what she has suffered, what we both suffered, from this concealment, even in your anger you must have pitied us."

Ellen, who still remained with her head reclining upon her father's breast, felt herself fondly pressed yet nearer to his heart.

"Proclaim it to all the world," added her husband. "There is the certificate of our marriage; show it to your friends—to all who have wronged by a doubt an angel's purity."

He placed the paper in the hands of Mrs. Hannan.

"Let me look at it," said the widow, who had been sobbing by herself in a corner all the while. "Not that I doubt thee, lad, thof tha'rt thee father's son."

"Granny! granny!" whispered Martin.

"I wish Bessie and Sam wor back, that's all."

To satisfy the widow, the boy read the certificate to her. The old woman listened attentively to every word, and when he concluded, muttered half aloud:

"It be something toward the debt, but not all—not all."

CHAPTER XLIV.

Justice, and shadows, will our steps pursue;
The gaol, though far, is never lost to view.
AUTHOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

Some time elapsed before Willie and his wife could realize to themselves the great and unexpected happiness of finding their lost child restored to them pure as when she quitted their humble home—pure as when a smiling infant she curled her little arms around her blind father's neck, who wept that he could not behold the features of the blessing God had sent him.

The joy of the grandmother was, as might be expected from her character, of a more boisterous description—something more of human pride mixed with it. Ellen was the wife of Frederick Bentley, the son of one of the richest men in Manchester. There was a feeling of triumph, as well as a secret sense of atonement for the wrong to her own daughter Bessie, in the fact.

The only person who did not appear quite happy at the discovery was the brother of the bride. He recollected how harshly he had spoken to her, and wondered that he had ever believed for an instant in her guiltiness. His doubts seemed to him now like an outrage upon Heaven.

"Martin," said the blushing wife, extending her arms to him, "will you not forgive me?"

In an instant the boy who had so bitterly resented the supposed degradation, who had tossed the purse from his father's hat with honest scorn, was enfolded in her embrace, sobbing like a child upon her neck.

"Mr. Hannan," said Frederick, taking his father-in-law by the hand, "changed as my prospects are, my position is wealthy compared with the honorable poverty I find around me. You must permit me to alter this. In fact," he added, hesitatingly, "I thought it had been changed already."

He alluded to the arrangement he had made with the correspondent of the firm in Liverpool to forward one hundred pounds to him in the name of Bessie and Sam, as if from America.

"You see I was right, wife," whispered the blind man. "The letter has been received," he added; "but I guessed the hand that sent it, and refused it."

"O, father! father! In such misery, too!"

"I have no pride now, Ellen," continued her parent. "I need not blush to receive assistance from my children."

"Thank you!" exclaimed Frederick, warmly; "thank you for that word. It sounded like the seal of forgiveness for the bitter pangs I caused you."

"Forgiven," murmured Willie, pressing his daughter fondly to him—"forgiven and forgotten—a dream of the past. Let us speak of it no more."

Frederick Bentley and his youthful brother-in-law speedily became very excellent friends. Their hearts were made to understand each other, and each succeeding day cemented their friendship.

"Why did you smile," demanded the former, "when I shook hands with your father?"

"Did you not observe that he placed his hand upon your shoulder?" replied the youth.

"Yes. What of that?"

"He would have liked to pass it over your features."

"I do not understand you."

"It is his way of making acquaintance with those whom he has never seen," observed Martin. "His sight is in the sense of touch."

The next time the blind man placed his hand in his, Frederick drew it several times gently down his face; at first very slowly.

"Thank you," said Willie. "You are very like your good mother. I am glad of that—very glad."

There was an expression of sadness, mingled with relief in his tone, which indicated more than his words.

In the course of the following day, many of the articles of furniture which had been sold were replaced, and those which were pledged brought back; and Ellen assisted her mother to re-arrange them. Words cannot paint the happiness she felt in the task, as she saw the home of her childhood resuming something like the appearance of former comfort.

One piece of furniture the widow insisted on filling herself: the corner cupboard, with the favorite set of china. She was never tired of contemplating it.

"Won't John be glad," she observed, "when he *sees* I have got it back again!"

The blind musician was so in the habit of speaking of seeing things himself, that his friends frequently fell into the same error.

"What were you saying about John?" inquired her son. "I fear the old man must be ill. For three days he has not been near us."

At the request of her husband, Mrs. Hannan promised to call upon him that very day, and Ellen begged so hard to accompany her that her desire was granted.

"He will be so glad to hear my voice again," observed the young wife, joyfully. "I was always a favorite with him, and he will love you, Fred., when he hears how good you have been."

Her father made no observation. He recollected the singular prejudice his old friend had taken to the father of his son-in-law only from the sound of his voice, and how still more singularly his prejudice had been justified.

The blind musician, we fear, had been compelled to draw rather largely upon his three remaining sovereigns in consequence of the increased distress, and yet he met it bravely. He had given up his two comfortable rooms, and removed to a smaller one—a mere dark closet in the roof of the house—a miserable place; but John regretted the change more on account of his birds than himself.

As Mrs. Hannan ascended the staircase, she encountered the sinister-looking, over-dressed man, whose mocking, triumphant glances at her husband had so excited her indignation. The sight of him brought the circumstance fresh to her mind, and so distressed her, that she felt scarcely able to proceed.

"What is the matter? Are you ill, mother?" demanded Ellen, anxiously.

"Nothing, nothing."

The stranger, who had heard the inquiry, paused as he descended.

"The staircase—shortness of breath."

The next instant he continued his way down.

Not knowing that John had changed rooms, his visitors knocked at the door of his former lodging, but instead of the merry, friendly voice of their friend, a sharp, querulous one replied to them.

"It's no use; I won't sell the watch, nor tell you where I have hid it."

"What can he mean?" whispered Ellen.

"So yer may as well be off; yer won't get it," added the speaker.

Mrs. Hannan knocked again.

The door was opened by an old man, very shabbily dressed. He had swarthy features and a white beard. His appearance would have been venerable, but for the expression of mingled cunning and ferocity in his small, twinkling black eyes, which produced anything but a favorable impression. Whilst conversing with the females he kept these eyes half shut.

"What do yer want?" he demanded, angrily.

"I beg your pardon, but——"

"What do yer want?" interrupted the man, impatiently. "*I aint no time to throw away upon the house-dwellers.*"

"We do not reside in the house," observed Ellen, not understanding the expression.

The old man opened his thin lips, and gave a low, hearty chuckle.

"I come to inquire," added her mother, "after a humble but valued friend."

"I aint no friends."

"A poor blind man," added Ellen.

"Who is allays a scratching on the fiddle?"

"Yes."

"Next stairs—first door to the right."

"Thank you for——"

Without waiting to listen to their acknowledgments, the man with the white beard shut the door rudely in their faces; and before they quitted the landing they heard him draw several heavy bolts.

"Strange!"

"Most singular," whispered Ellen.

Mother and daughter exchanged glances, as if to interrogate each other's thoughts.

"Come on!" exclaimed Blind John. "I know your step, Mrs. Hannan, though it bean't as light as it used to be. But you have gotten some un with you."

"Yes."

"Well," said the old man, impatiently, "who is it? Martin?"

"No."

"Glad to find yer so cheerful. Yer be play-actin', I fancy."

"Can't you guess, John?"

"Well," replied the musician, speaking very deliberately, "I might guess wrong, and would pain yer; not that I be often mistaken. I'd rather yer told me."

"Mrs. Bentley."

"Who?"

"Mrs. Frederick Bentley," repeated the proud, happy mother, prouder of the innocence of her child than if her marriage had brought wealth with it.

The next instant the arms of Ellen were round the neck of Blind John, and her soft lips pressed to his wrinkled cheek. She loved him for his kindness to her father—for the memories of her happy childhood.

"God bless 'ee, lass!" faltered the old man. "I be better pleased than if I had found the bushel o' gowden guineas which I have heerd say Lord Darby—him as they cut the head off at Bolton—buried at Chatmoss. And so tha'rt back ag'in, and it be all right and comfortable? How happy poor Willie mun be! Tha'rt really and truly a wife?"

"Really and truly," repeated his visitor, with a blush. With any one else she would have felt offended, perhaps, at the bluntness of the question.

"Wedded in church?"

"In church, John."

"Thanks be to the Awmeety!" ejaculated the musician. "Thah father can hold up his head ag'in. He wor allays proud on thee, and good reason, as it turns out. And so tha'rt come to see the old man?"

"And pay my father's debt of gratitude to him," answered Ellen, placing in his hand a little purse containing ten sovereigns, which her husband had given her for the musician.

"What be this? gowd!"

"It is your own," said Mrs. Hannan—"all your own."

Blind John counted the money carefully. It was the first time, most probably, that he had ever been possessed of so large a sum. In his poverty it appeared a fortune to him, and yet he hesitated to accept it.

"And Willie—what be he to do?"

"My father?"

"Ay, lass; he do want it more than I. I ha' gotton only ane mooth—the wee birdies don't cost much to feed; he has four. Gi'e it to him, and God bless you for thinkin' on the old man."

A few words explained to the speaker that even if Frederick Bentley was discarded by his father on account of his marriage, he would still be in a position to keep his wife's family from actual want.

"So you must go back to your rooms, John," said Ellen, "and I and my husband will come and see you. You must play to him; he is passionately fond of music, and will appreciate your skill."

"Fond o' music, is he?" said the musician, putting the purse in his pocket, for the explanation had satisfied him. "Glad to hear that.

"What kind o' voice has he?" he added, earnestly.

The young wife felt perplexed at the question, and regarded her mother inquiringly, who smiled. Mrs. Hannan perfectly understood it.

"Full and soft," she replied.

"Does he speak upon the half note?"

"Certainly not."

"Thah ought to know, thah ought to know," muttered the musician, at the same time rubbing his hands together, a habit he had when greatly pleased. "Full and soft," he repeated; "I be glad o' that, I be glad o' that."

"And you will return to your rooms?"

"Can't promise that; they be let, lass, they be let; and if it weren't for the birdies, who can't get out to take the air as I can, I should be very well here."

"But I wish to see you in the old place again," urged Ellen. "I shall never venture to come and see you alone, as I used to do, whilst that horrible man is in the house."

"Well," said Blind John, speaking very deliberately, "he be a singular sort o' bein', but I ain't *seen* any bad in him as yet."

Mrs. Hannan related the circumstance of her meeting the Jew Norle upon the stairs; her previous meeting with him in front of the Dispensary, and the peculiar glances he had cast upon her husband.

The old man listened attentively; interrupted her several times to ask some question, and when she had concluded, appeared buried in thought.

"I'll find it out," he said, speaking at last, "if it is to be found out; but you mun help me."

"How?"

"By keeping away from him; and above all, don't let Willie come near the place. They mustn't see him. I'll call this evening and have a talk wi' him.

"Mind," he repeated, emphatically, as they quitted the room, "they mustn't see him."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

GENIUS, TALENT AND CLEVERNESS.

Genius rushes like a whirlwind—talent marches like a cavalcade of heavy men and heavy horses—cleverness skims like a swallow in the summer evening, with a sharp, shrill note and a sudden turning. The man of genius dwells with men and with nature; the man of talent in his study; but the clever man dances here, there and everywhere, like a butterfly in a hurricane, striking everything and enjoying nothing, but too light to be dashed to pieces. The man of talent will attack theories, the clever man will assail the individual, and slander private character. The man of genius despises both; he heeds none, he fears none, he lives in himself, shrouded in the consciousness of his own strength; he interferes with none, and walks forth an example that "eagles fly alone—they are but sheep that herd together." It is true, that should a *poisonous worm cross his path he may tread it under his foot; should a cur snarl at him he may chastise him; but he will not, cannot attack the privacy of another.*

* * *

MEN OF THE REVOLUTION.

Gen. Green, in his despatches, after the battle of Eutaw, says: Hundreds of my men were naked as they were born. Judge Johnson, in his "Life of Green," says: Posterity will scarcely believe that the loins of many men who carried death into the enemy's ranks at Eutaw, were galled by their cartouch boxes, while a fold of rag or tuft of moss protected the shoulder from the same injury from the musket. General Green says, in his letter to the Secretary of War: We have three hundred men without arms, and more than one thousand so naked that they can be put on duty only in the most desperate cases. Our difficulties are so enormous, and our wants so pressing, that I have not a moment's relief from the most painful anxieties. I have more embarrassments than it is proper to disclose to the world.

* * *

THE MONARCH STILL A MAN.

Who forgets the anecdote of Napoleon and the village bells of Brientz? He was riding late one day over a battle field, gazing stern and unmoved on the dying and the dead that strewed the ground by thousands about him, when suddenly "those evening bells" struck up a merry peal. The emperor paused to listen; his heart had softened; memory was busy with the past; he was no longer the conqueror of Austerlitz, but the innocent, happy schoolboy at Brientz; and, dismounting from his horse, he seated himself on the stump of an old tree, and, to the astonishment of Rapp, who relates the circumstance, burst into tears. The rock was smitten, and living waters came gushing from it.

* * *

GOOD NATURE.

One cannot imagine any quality of the human mind whence greater advantages can arise to society than good nature, seeing that a man is a social being, not made for solitude, but conversation. Good nature not only lessens the sorrows of life, but increases its comforts. It is more agreeable than beauty, or even wit. It gives a pleasing expression to the countenance, and induces a multitude of the most amiable observations. It is, indeed, the origin of all society. Were it not for good nature, men could not exist together, nor hold intercourse with one another.

* * *

HABITS.

Like flakes of snow that fall unperceived upon the earth, the seemingly unimportant events of life succeed one another. As the snow gathers together, so are our habits formed. No single flake that is added to the pile produces a sensible change; no single action creates, however it may exhibit, a man's character; but as the tempest hurls the avalanche down the mountains, and overwhelms the inhabitant and his habitation, so passion, acting upon the elements of mischief which pernicious habits have brought together by imperceptible accumulation, may overthrow the edifice of truth and virtue.

* * *

"COMMON SENSE."—Abernethy used to like very well to talk with Spurzheim, who resided for some time in this country. One day Abernethy, half-seriously, half-humorously, said to Spurzheim, "Well, doctor, where do you place the organ of common sense?" Spurzheim's reply certainly sustained the coincidence of phrenological deductions with those of experience. "There is no organ," said he, "for common sense, but it depends on the equilibrium of the other organs."

HOPING AGAINST HOPE.

BY ALICE CARY.

Lullaby, lullaby, sings the storm!
The mother she singeth low
To the little baby in her arm
As she rocketh to and fro.
Sleep to its lullaby while you can,
For soon the clouds will break,
And your little brother Merriman
Be kissing your eyes awake!

Her face is pale, her tune is wild,
And she singeth low, so low;
Sleep, my little, my lovely child—
The storm will not be snow!
The clouds are gray as fog in th' fen,
The way is wild and dim,
But your little brother Merriman,
He is stout of heart and limb.

The arms of the brier-rose are white
As they cross her window-pane,
And still she singeth her lullaby light
And all about the rain.
Close she foldeth her gentle hands,
She singeth as best she can,
For the rose-bush in the storm it stands
For her little Merriman.

She hears the throttling crash and din
Of boughs as they break and fall,
And she singeth of little Merriman,
Beating home through it all.
I'll warrant me his young blood stirs
To see a storm so mad,
His hair 'll be white as his grandfather's—
I shall hardly know the lad!

But strive all bravely as she can
Her heart is not misled,
And she thinks of her little Merriman,
With the snow above his head.
And she singeth of how the robin and wren
Buried the babes in the grove,
And she singeth about how drownèd men
Have been brought to life by love.

◆

FOREST ADVENTURES.—No. 14.

BY COL. WALTER B. DUNLAP.

THE BLAUWE WILDE-BEEST.

We were sitting upon the soft grass, between our wagons, in the light of the dying fire, enjoying our evening smoke. Abner had concluded his calculations, and had announced the cash value of our ivory, when the silence was broken by Ben Gilroy.

"My dear Fitzeben," said he, soberly and seriously, "I want to ask you a question."

"Ask it, den," returned Fitz.

"But you must not be offended, my good Fitzeben. I ask for information; and I hope you will answer me truthfully."

"Good golly! did ye ebber know dis nigger to tell a lie? Guess you'd better look to home, Mas'r Ben."

"Don't get into a passion, my old ebony. I know you never lie,—so answer me."

"Well—ax yer question."

"Here it is, my dear Fitzeben," continued Ben, with austere gravity: "*Did you ever see an elephant?*"

The old darkey caught up a boot which Harry had just pulled off, and started to his feet.

"By de big bowl, Ben Gilroy!—look out for yer head!—look out!—I'm goin' to——"

Fitzeben's speech was cut short by Harry's snatching away the boot; and as we all burst into a merry laugh, he sat down again, and resumed his smoking; but not, however, without muttering threats of dire vengeance against his tormentor.

On the following day we set forth again in quest of game, and towards noon, upon reaching the top of a small hill, I saw a herd of six elephants standing by the edge of a wood, not more than a quarter of a mile away. One of them was a bull, and much larger than his companions; and him I singled out for the first fall. The animals discovered us almost as soon as we discovered them, and tossing their trunks in the air, they set off through the sparce woods. At first they only walked, leisurely and majestically; but soon they broke into a trot, which was ere long increased to a run. But, before they had fairly opened to their speed, we were close upon them. The experience of the day before had taught me that our best way would be to direct our united attack against one animal; for, should we try for too much, we might lose all. So, as I had already planned, we made our mark upon the patriarch of the herd, whom I saluted first with a steel-pointed chincapin in the shoulder. We had put a dozen balls into him in as many seconds, and the result was, that he staggered, and fell behind his companions; and in less than fifteen minutes from the firing of the first shot we had conquered him.

After this we gave chase to the others, and succeeded in capturing one more, which was accomplished just as the sun was sinking behind a distant hill-top. This second elephant was a small one, and his tusks were not of the best quality; but the first one more than made up for it. The tusks of the old patriarch were longer and larger than either of those we had taken on the previous day, and their quality was also of the best.

It was well into the night before we got our supper; but we eat with a keen relish when we did eat, and counted ourselves fortunate in our day's labor. But our sport was not to continue without some annoyance, as we shall see.

On the next morning we were early astir, and by the time the sun was up we had disposed of our breakfast, and were in the saddle, ready for another elephant hunt.

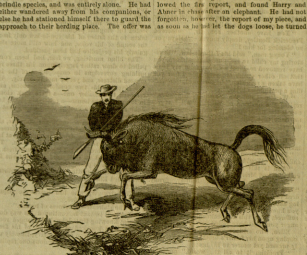
While on the chase, the day before, I had noticed an elephant spoor leading off to the westward, which I had then no time to follow; and I determined that our track for this occasion should be in that direction. We struck the spoor at the distance of about five miles from our camp, and when we had followed it a short way we found it branching off into a number of separate paths. I took the centre path, which was the widest, leaving the others to go as they chose; but before we separated it was arranged that the report of a rifle should be the signal for the others to hasten to the assistance of him who had fired.

For some little time I could hear the tramp of my companions, as they pursued their respective courses; but finally the sounds died away, and I was alone. At the distance of half a mile, or more, my spoor separated into two branches, and I kept to the right, where, pretty soon, I found fresh tracks of the elephant. I spurred up my horse, feeling confident I would be the first to give the signal. I had dashed on thus but a few moments, when my horse stopped so suddenly that I came very nigh going over his head.

As I regained my seat, and seized my rifle, I expected to see an elephant looming up somewhere in the wood; but in this I was disappointed. Instead of an elephant in the wood, I beheld, in the path, directly before me, the largest brindled gnoo I ever chanced to meet—almost as large as the horse upon which I rode. His shaggy, ugly looking face was turned with defiant demeanor upon me, and he absolutely acted as though he was prepared to give me battle.

The gnoo (the *wildebeest* of the Dutch) is one of the most singular animals I ever met. The term "horned-horse," often applied to it, is not wholly inappropriate, though it evidently belongs to the ox family. It has the head and horns of the buffalo; the body of the horse; and limbs almost as light as an antelope's. The horns, which are strong and formidable, are close together at the base, descending first downward and outward, and then curving upward and backward. The general color of the common species is a tawny yellow, and his height does not exceed four feet at the shoulders. The brindled gnoo, (the *blauwe wildebeest*,) is much larger than the former, and far more powerful. His color is a yellowish grey, with dark stripes about the shoulders, changing from grey to brown as we approach the limbs. His height at the shoulders is five feet, and over; and the length of body from seven to eight feet; the length of his horns being about two feet. At first sight the gnoo is rather clumsy in appearance; but when we once see him in motion we discover that he is spry and active, almost equalling the horse in speed. They generally wander about in large herds, like wild cattle, and do not flee from the hunter like other beasts; but gallop around the danger, frisking and prancing, as though anxious to discover the intent of the intruder.

The fellow before me was an old bull of the brindle species, and was entirely alone. He had either wandered away from his companions, or else he had stationed himself there to guard the approach to their herding place. The offer was too tempting to be refused. He would give us some very fine steak; and, moreover, I wanted his horns. I had raised my piece to my shoulder, and my finger was upon the trigger, when the report of a distant rifle broke upon my ear. But it was too late for me to hold up. I fired, and the gnoo bounded into the air, and then fell upon his knees, with his nose pressed upon the ground. I supposed I had killed him; so I slipped from my saddle and hurried towards him for the purpose of cutting his throat to bleed him. I had my rifle in my left hand—my double-barrel—and my knife in my right. I had reached his side, and was stooping down to lay my rifle upon the ground, when he threw his head up, striking my right elbow with one of his horns, and knocking my knife from my hand. I started back a pace, and cocked my piece, intending to give him the contents of the second barrel; but he was quicker than I was. By the time I had fairly gained my feet he was up; and with a loud snort he plunged forward, aiming his sharp horns for the attack. I darted back, and endeavored to get my rifle in position to fire; but before I could do so he was upon me. I put out my hands, still clutching the rifle, and as he struck me I fell over backward. He saw his advantage, and bending his head for a fatal blow, he drove his horns at my breast. If he had struck as he had aimed, that moment would have been my last of earth; but a fortunate accident saved me. I was still holding my rifle before me, and as he drove in for the close, his curving horn—the right one—hooked into the guard of my piece, slipping up till it bound itself, about half way down the base to the tip.



It will be remembered that my rifle was cocked, and as the horn had slipped in forward of the trigger, of course the piece was instantly discharged. The snap of the cap, directly in his eye, and the ring of the report so near to his head, added to the entanglement of his horn, startled and staggered the beast, and he gave a leap backward. This movement brought him upon his haunches, and me upon my feet. I saw my only chance, and, with all my might, I wrenched his head over, bringing him down upon his left side, with both my knees upon his shoulder.

My position was now a curious one. The gnoo's horn remained firmly fixed in the guard of my rifle, by means of which, with one hand above the lock, and the other below it, I held his head down. He was upon his side, fairly cast, with his feet out from under him; and as long as I could hold his head down, and keep my position upon his shoulder, he could not get up.

My first ball had struck the beast in the forehead, without penetrating the skull, as I could see where it had glanced up over the base of the horns. This had for the moment stunned him, and led me into error.

For a little while I held the gnoo down without much difficulty; but it was plain that I had "caught a Tartar." I dared not relax my hold an atom. There was not bullet in my rifle, and my knife was far from me. If I let go, the beast would be upon his feet in an instant; and, once upon his feet, I should be at his mercy. So I held him down. But how long could this last? I was growing weak, while the gnoo was just beginning to struggle with the first effort of returning strength. It was natural that I should call for help, and I did so with all the power of voice I possessed; for the feeling began to possess me that if help did not come, I might find it difficult to save myself.

To tell the plain truth, I was a little fearful—possessed of a fear that I might die there beneath the horns and hoofs of the *blauwe wildebeest!* And yet, once or twice, when the ridiculousness of my position led me to picture Fitzeben in my place, I laughed outright. But my laughing was done before I got very tired. After my arms became weak, and my knees tremulous, I thought no more of smiling.

The gnoo struggled more and more, and once he came very near getting his forward feet under him. I put forth all my remaining strength, and bore him down. Again he gave a mighty throe, and I heard something crack. The guard was giving way! The screws were loosening in the wood! If that failed me, I was gone. Once more I called for help; and, as I called, I uttered a prayer to Heaven that I might be heard.

Weaker and weaker I became, while my enemy seemed to become stronger. While I had been there upon the gnoo, I had heard a dozen rifle-shots in the distance—in a distance far away—which led me to the belief that my companions had found and attacked an elephant. If that was so, what hope had I from them!

One more mighty struggle, and I yet held the ascendance. But could I withstand another one? My power was leaving me, and my head was beginning to swim. Suddenly, like notes of heavenly music, broke a human voice upon my ear:

"Master! Master! Where are you?"

"Here! here!" I cried.

And in a moment more my boy Dan came leaping to my side.

"Strike! strike!"

He understood me, and his keen knife was very quickly plunged into the heart of the struggling *wildebeest*.

My enemy was dead, and I was free; and, almost entirely exhausted, I rolled over upon the greensward. When I recovered myself Dan told me how he had found me. He had been left in charge of the dogs, to follow in the direction of the first shot he should hear. He heard the report of Harry's rifle first, and in a moment afterward he thought he heard mine; but he followed the first report, and found Harry and Abner in chase after an elephant. He had not forgotten, however, the report of my piece, and as soon as he had let the dogs loose, he turned after me, meaning to help me if I had started up an elephant; and, if I had not, to inform me what the others had found. He came to me just in season, as has already been seen; and once more I owed him for the saving of my life.

I found my horse quietly grazing not far off, and taking the small hatchet which I carried in a holster of the saddle, I went back and chopped off the horns of the gnoo, being determined not to lose that trophy. When I reached my companions I found them in possession of a fine bull elephant; and while they exhibited the newly gained ivory, I showed my gnoo horns and told them of my adventure.

When we were ready to return to camp I sent Bolus and Fitzeben, under the guidance of Dan, to bring us the best of the flesh of the gnoo. And that night, for supper, I had the satisfaction of eating a juicy steak from the rump of the *blauwe wildebeest* that had come so near bringing me to mortal grief.

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WHEN I LIVED WITH MRS. SMITH.

If there is anything calculated to "rile" the mistress of a family, it is this common rejoinder of domestics to any attempt to regulate the household work. Will they *never* be made to understand, be they English, Irish, German, or Yankee, that Mrs. Smith's way of managing *her* family affairs can have no possible connexion with Mrs. Jones' plans for the same. That, on the contrary, Mrs. Jones does not care a d——ime what hour of the day Mrs. Smith breakfasts, dines, or sups; what days she goes out, or stays in; or in what manner she has her washing, clear-starching and cooking done. In short, that it is not only totally irrelevant to the subject to mention her, but a nuisance and an irritation. *Can* Betty, or Sally, or Bridget ever comprehend that, when they engaged to work for Mrs. Jones, they were not engaged to work according to Mrs. Smith's programme, or their own, or that of any mistress who has ever existed since Eve, who, blessed be her name, lived on grapes and things that involved no servants. And can any phrenologist inform us whether a kitchen-bump exists which, if patiently manipulated for a series of months, might in time convey the idea, that while roast-beef, done to leather, may be palatable to Mrs. Smith, rare beef may be equally palatable to Mrs. Jones? Also, if by any elaborate and painstaking process of instruction, Sally, or Bridget, or Betty might be taught, that the hours for meals in different families may be allowed to vary, according to the different tastes and occupations of each, and that without endangering the Constitution of the United States. In short, that it is about time that the kitchen-traditions, with which domestics usually swathe themselves round, like so many mummies, were abolished; and every family-tub be allowed quietly to repose on its own independent bottom.

We often wonder how *Mr.* Jones or *Mr.* Smith would fancy it, should Tom Tiddler, their clerk, answer their orders by informing them gratuitously of the manner in which the firm of Jenkins & Co. conducted their mercantile business; and how they would stand being harrowed within an inch of their lives while busily taking an account of stock by any such irrelevant nonsense.

Also: I would respectfully submit whether the petty, every-day irritations over which *Mr.* Jones or *Mr.* Smith smoke themselves stupid, or explode in naughty words, should not, in the case of *Mrs.* Jones and *Mrs.* Smith, be allowed some other escape-valve than that of the "Woman's Guide Book's"—*sweet smile.*

FANNY FERN.

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MODERN MISNOMERS.

People fond of plain Saxon must be driven demented by the manner in which the present generation stalk round on wordy stilts. Perhaps you may not know that barbers' shops now-a-days have no existence; they are transformed into "Temples of Art." If this were the only misnomer, I wouldn't mention it; but what do you think of a sixpenny rum-shop dignified with the name of "The Arcade?" or an "Excelsior Market," which is simply four barrels on the sidewalk, with a board across, upon which reposes a stale mackerel, two or three smelts, and a basket of worm-eaten potatoes; or the "Jenny Lind Hotel," which is a two-story "shanty" with broken panes of glass, a barrel of Jamaica Rum, a frowzy landlady, and three babies; or the "Victoria Dining Saloon," consisting of a broken caster, a soiled table-cloth, salt-cellars too intimate with eggs, a pair of ricketty chairs, a wilted head of lettuce, and a small waiter with a very doubtful apron.

In view of these facts, is it any wonder that the great dry-goods Crœsus refrains from signifying to the passer-by, either by flaunting signs or gaudy finger-posts, where his palatial establishment may be found? It might be a mammoth marble Bank, or College, or Institute, or Church, so sublimely in his self-poised independence, does he eschew any token of his commercial existence. Not to know *him,* argues yourself unknown. Meantime, my friend, observe the daily processions of carriages, with prancing horses and sleek drivers, before his door; from which emerge silken-clad dames, with plethoric persons and purses. "Great cry and little wool" is an old proverb, which seems to me, not on that account, to be without significance. I commend the text, without farther comment, to those of my readers who are fond of boot-makers "from Paris" by the name of Patrick O'Flanagan; or "milliners from London" who have never in their lives passed from beyond the smoke of their own American chimnies.

FANNY FERN.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

PEACE MAN.—This correspondent wants us to advocate an immediate and unconditional peace, because the war not only interferes with his pecuniary interests, but also threatens disaster to what he says has long been the dearest project of his heart, to wit, the marrying of a beautiful and wealthy young lady. "Before this war broke out," he writes, "everything was going on smoothly. I was partially engaged to the young lady, who is a great heiress; but when the young men of this section began to volunteer, and troops went marching around with drums beating and colors flying, the heads of all the girls were turned, and they would not look at anybody but a soldier. I was in hopes, however, that the young lady upon whom I had fixed my affections would not be carried away by the excitement, as her family were originally from South Carolina, but I soon found that I was mistaken. She had a foolish pride in her ancestry, who she said fought under Marion to *establish* the Union, and that she would never marry any man who was not ready and willing to fight to *maintain* it. And so *she* ran after the soldiers too. I said but little, hoping that time and experience would cure her; but again I have found myself mistaken. She is now more rabid than ever, and declares that she would despise herself forever if she should *even think* of marrying a *young man* who could stay quietly at home while his neighbors and friends were dying in defence of their country. So, I am satisfied now that so long as this war lasts, I shall stand no chance to get my rights. Besides, I think we have had enough of it, and for my part I can't see where the harm would be if we should let the South go. At any rate, it couldn't hurt me, and in these troublous and uncertain days, I hold that it is the duty of every man to look out for himself. I wish therefore you would say something on the subject that would help me with the young lady I have referred to. She reads the LEDGER every week, and has great faith in what you say. I know she does, because she has often told me so. So please do what you can for me." You ought to join the "peace leagues," and stump the country. Your "platform" is just the thing for a "peace man;" it is brief, compact, and easily understood. "Look out for self," is the essence of the whole matter. It is plainly to be seen that you can never win the heart of the patriotic and high-spirited young lady to whom you refer. A buzzard might as well woo an eagle.

P. R.—The law of the land in relation to the subject to which you refer is as follows: "In case of removal, death, resignation or inability both of the President and Vice-President of the United States, the President of the Senate *pro tempore*, and in case there be no President of the Senate, then the Speaker of the House of Representatives, for the time being, shall act as President of the United States until the disability be removed or a President shall be elected." The same act of Congress provides, that, "Whenever the office of President and Vice-President shall both become vacant, the Secretary of State shall forthwith cause a notification thereof to be made to the executive [governor] of every State, and shall also cause the same to be published in at least one of the newspapers published in each State, specifying that electors of the President of the United States shall be appointed or chosen in the several States within thirty-four days preceding the first Wednesday of December then next ensuing," &c. You see, therefore, that Congress has made ample provision to secure a Chief Magistrate to the nation in case of accidents such as you mention.

N. Y.—We do not propose to enter into the business of predicting what must or will be the issue of this, that or the other course of action on the part of public functionaries and generals. It may not be amiss, however, now and then to state what *has* been, by way of furnishing chart and compass to those who have the responsibility of steering the ship of state through the tempests of the times. One thing that seems to be settled is, that no military man who has shown a fondness for writing on the art of war, or on military tactics, has been a good commander in the field. Another fact which seems to have been established is, that no general has ever succeeded in aggressive warfare who did not himself have a keen relish for battle.

A. A. A.—If it storms on the night appointed for a party, and the party be postponed to some other time, it would be advisable, perhaps necessary, for a young gentleman who was under engagement to go to the party with a young lady, to call on her for the purpose of seeing if she intended to go on the new evening appointed, and also if she would like his company on that occasion. If a beau should not take such a precaution, he might find himself *minus* his belle, as she would have reason to suppose, if she did not hear from him on the subject, that he considered the engagement terminated by the postponement of the party.

A FALLEN LOVER sends us the following brief but melancholy epistle, namely: "There was a young lady whom I loved strangely and passing well. She promised to marry me; but she went into the country to spend a season of recuperation, and came back married. I was knocked into a cocked hat by the shock, and it has affected my health and spirits ever since. I can't get over it. It is killing me. Please give me some advice." You ought to set about something that will give you active employment, and keep your spirits in a whirl of excitement. Enlist in a cavalry regiment.

INQUIRER.—A woman whose husband has gone to the war, and who is living alone, should of course take care not to bring scandal upon herself by carelessness, however innocent she may be. Nor should any man who is really and truly her friend allow *his* carelessness to cast a stain upon her reputation or give scandal-mongers opportunities to employ their baleful tongues to her detriment. In the light which these plain principles shed upon the case, you ought not to have any difficulty in coming to a correct conclusion nor in ordering your conduct accordingly.

JUSTICE.—Your vehemence is quite thrown away. There is no doubt that the majority of people are as eager to have "justice" done as you are; but the question is, What is justice? *You* are not to be the judge in every case in which you happen to be interested. As a general thing, when a man clamors for "justice," and accuses the community generally of being "insensible to justice," and such like stuff, he is in fact clamoring merely *to have his own way.* That is generally such a man's idea of justice.

C. K.—It is strange that you have never heard of the old and well known motto, "Faint heart ne'er won fair lady." A man who has not learned that and several cognate things, has not finished his education, by any means, no matter if he has "graduated from one of the first colleges in this country." What is a four-year course at college, or even the most learned "faculty," compared to "a mouth that breathes and eyes that burn?" You must go ahead and carry your charmer's heart by storm. Sieges are not popular, in these days, either in love or war.

MRS. M.—We have repeatedly expressed our disbelief in "powders" and quack preparations of any kind, no matter what virtue or potency may be claimed for them. It may be that some of the medicines advertised as furnishing cures for specific ailments do actually possess curative properties; but it is impossible to tell the good from the worthless, at least beforehand, and "certificates of character" applied to patent medicines are utterly untrustworthy. The family physician should, therefore, always be consulted about such matters.

D. S.—The exquisite little poem called "My Mother's Bible" was written by our esteemed friend, General George P. Morris, who has long been acknowledged to be among the very best song and ballad writers in the world.

A. B. C.—Your friend is right and you are wrong. The word *corps*, meaning a body of soldiers, is pronounced *core* and not *corpse.*

A STRANGER sends us a singular letter, the substance of which we give, omitting, of course, all names and dates. He says: "Will you advise me as to the course I should pursue in the following case? Several years ago I became violently in love with a young lady, who seemed to reciprocate my passion, but on proposing to marry her, to my astonishment and chagrin she refused her hand. No quarrel ensued between us, and we parted in the most friendly manner, but I confess my heart was almost broken. Time passed. We often met; but the subject was never again mentioned. During this time my passion steadily increased. After a time she married a most *hateful* man, double her own age. Shortly afterwards I courted and married a lady who, in beauty, intelligence and wealth, excelled the object of my first love—I may say my only love, for I never loved my wife, though she is a most amiable woman and excellent wife. I often met the lady, and to this day I have been unable to conquer my passion, but it increases steadily. My energy is gone and my health is rapidly declining. I believe the woman loves me almost as passionately as I love her, and that to the exclusion of her husband, whom she certainly is sick of. Of course, I would not abandon the good woman who is my wife, nor allow a word or glance to escape me which would be improper under the circumstances. Now, how can I kill the hateful passion? I have striven in vain. It is fast killing me. All I ask is to be emancipated from this terrible thraldom and to love my own good wife." We have a very decided answer to give this correspondent; but before publishing it, we should like to hear what some of our subscribers, both ladies and gentlemen, think of the case.

AN IGNORANT COUNTRY GIRL, as she signs herself, wants to know if it would be proper for a lady to ask a gentleman for his photograph, and adds: "We have been acquainted for over two years; he has been living in our family and treated as a member of it; and we are now about to part, perhaps forever." This letter is a fair sample of scores that we are constantly receiving from young ladies, in regard to asking gentlemen for their miniatures, or exchanging miniatures with them. The answer to all such questions is, that it would be improper for a young lady to ask a gentleman for his miniature, or to offer to exchange with him. In the case above stated, if the gentleman, on taking what may be a final leave of the family, does not offer to leave his photograph with them, it would not be delicate for a young lady of the family to ask him for it. So far as such matters are concerned, a lady should leave a gentleman to take the affirmative in all things and in all respects. It is barely possible that a case might arise wherein a lady might without impropriety ask a gentleman for his miniature; but in such a case the very condition of things which would make it proper for her to ask would prevent her from ever having a thought as to the propriety or impropriety of so doing. A good rule for a young lady to adopt and enforce in all such cases is, *never to do anything about the propriety of which she has even the slightest doubt.* By following this rule she will certainly never go wrong.

UNHAPPY.—"I am still a young girl," writes this correspondent, "but I have been engaged to a young man about two years. When I engaged myself to him I was *very* young, and knew nothing about true love; but I fully believed *then* that I loved him. But as I grow older and mingle with gay companions, I find that there are others whom I prefer to him. There is but one thing that I have against him, and that is, he is very jealous; he upbraids me with thinking more of others than I do of him, which vexes me, and often terminates in harsh words. He is true to me, and in appearance I am to him; but if he could read my secret thoughts, he would find that they were not of him, and that all that binds me to him is my word. He is continually urging me to marry him, but I do not feel like committing matrimony in my present state of feeling. Now, MR. LEDGER, please give me a little advice." Why do you not tell your lover just what you have told us? That would be the best way. It certainly is not right for you to continue in such a course of deception. Have a frank talk with him, and put an end to the false position in which your girlish folly has placed you.

J. M. PEASE, of Ohio, sends the following statement of facts to the LEDGER for the consideration of its philosophical readers. He says: "I have a well in my summer kitchen about twenty feet deep, and draw the water by a rope passing over a pulley seven feet above the top of said well, with a bucket at each end, so that when one bucket is up the other is down. Now, some eight feet of the [illegible] ter, while the balance is dry. This centre part of the rope rots and gives out long before the ends. Can any of your scientific readers give the reason of this phenomenon on philosophical principles? If they can, I wish they would do so." If any of our readers can help our Ohio correspondent, we should be pleased to have them do so.

BEAVER DAM asks: "When a gentleman goes to a party, or to any assembly of persons of both sexes, and then and there finds himself well received by persons of his own sex, and even receives from them expressions of satisfaction with his being there, if he should be slighted and made an object of ridicule by the female portion of the assembly, what then is the best thing for him to do? Give your advice, if you please, in the LEDGER." The best thing for him to do in such a case would be simply nothing. He should pay no attention to the ridicule, but console himself with the "expressions of satisfaction" which his presence elicits from "persons of his own sex."

A THREE YEARS' MAN, in active service, says, "It is rumored in our regiment that the time granted to a soldier on furlough will be added to the term of his enlistment; and as we are allowed 40 days furlough each year, or 120 days in the three years, we shall have to serve three years and four months from the time we were mustered in. Now, is this so?" We cannot say. No authority less than the Government itself could determine such a question; and if any of our readers have the means of knowing what the Government will do, or intend to do, in such a case, we should be glad to have them inform the soldiers through our columns.

DOCTOR.—You can, of course, sue your refractory patient for retaining your property; but it would be better to settle the matter in some other way. Such a suit might excite prejudice against you and injure your business; and, besides, it might go against you, unless you could convince the jury that the facts are precisely as you have set them forth to us, which you might not be able to do. Your opponent would have his story and his witnesses and his lawyer; and it would be strange if they would not be able to weaken your cause to some extent. Settle the matter, if you can, by all means.

COUNTRY BELLE.—If a gentleman, who was intimately acquainted with a young lady, should, on taking leave of her when he was about to go on a long journey, say to her, "I should be happy to hear from you at any time," it would be a very slim and insufficient foundation for her to base a correspondence on, unless he should subsequently write to her and request an answer. It would not be a sufficient warrant for her to *commence* the correspondence.

INFIRM.—When a man has a sick wife, and cannot get any good domestics with whom he likes to leave her and the children, he should get some lady, who is capable in such cases, to come in and stay with his wife as much as possible, during her illness, and he must also stay at home himself as much as he can. To a man who is devoted to the comfort and well-being of his wife, in such cases, a way will almost always be opened to secure them.

RELATIONS.—Of course it is not the duty of any man to allow his own or his wife's relations to become such a burden and annoyance in his family as to injure his wife's health, or even seriously to depress her spirits. A man's first duty is to his wife, in all such matters, and if the relations on either side come between him and its performance, that duty must be discharged, even at the hazard of discharging the relations also.

S.—A girl who thinks she has arrived at a suitable age to marry, and grieves because she has not received an offer, and who is capable of talking and writing about it to strangers, most certainly needs a vast deal of ripening yet of mind and spirit to fit her for the responsible duties of a wife and mother. However old she may be in years, she is too green as respects common sense and delicacy to be a fit companion for men or children.

WILLIAM.—We know that it is a general belief that cats are very mischievous in regard to a corpse, and that strict watch must be kept over a dead body to keep them from getting at and mutilating it; but we have no positive knowledge, and never read or heard any positive testimony, that would go to show that this common belief is anything more than a superstition.

G. F. (Newark).—If the newsdealer to whom you refer charges you five cents for the LEDGER, he is extorting money from you. In all such cases, we will send the LEDGER by mail to any one who forwards the subscription price to us.

J. C. W.—A man who, actually supposing that his wife is dead, and not having heard from her in ten years, marries again, and it should afterwards turn out that she was living, would not be guilty of bigamy.

O. O.—A great many estates belonging to tories were confiscated hereabouts at the close of the Revolutionary War. Some of them were very large, and the proceeds brought a handsome revenue to the State.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*